

TALES OF GOLD



IF NOT FOR YOU ...

Deborah Wilson, GRRMF Newsletter Editor

Yes, You! You, our supporters, save lives – precious Golden Retrievers of pure and sometimes blended ancestry. If you are reading this newsletter then you have made a noticeable difference in our world. You have saved and continue to save the lives of those who cannot speak on their own behalf, sometimes enduring in confused silence the heartache, loneliness, loss, and pain of emotional and/or physical distress. You have given the love within your heart, the labor of your hands, and the bounty within your wallet no matter the size of its contents. Know that you are not alone in your endeavors. There are many of us joined to the same goal. While your singular efforts make a difference, your added voice to GRRMF makes your efforts more powerful than you can imagine. Together we continue to open our doors and our hearts to those whom others may find the investment of time or money overwhelming. Together, we have turned many difficult situations into loving success stories for these precious golden retrievers.

Take a moment to go to our website and see all those wonderful faces such as Shannon's.



Shannon was turned in by a family who got her from a pet shop ... Shannon turned out to have deformities in her knees that kept them bowed out. The pet shop "guaranteed" their puppies and offered to take her back and replace her with another dog. What happens to these dogs when they are returned? The answer is pretty obvious. The family contacted GRRMF knowing that there was no other option for this beautiful, otherwise healthy young female. Shannon has had one surgery and is doing very well. Her second surgery will be scheduled shortly. The doctors feel she will have an excellent prognosis.

She is one of many just waiting for the chance to pour their love and companionship out to a family of their very own. Why would we turn such pure gold down just because it will take a little longer to heal their wounds? Who would throw away a gold nugget just because it wasn't already in perfectly smooth and shiny bar form? Of course as we all know, it doesn't stop with acquiring a gold nugget. It sometimes takes the intervention of specialists to transform and uncover the incredible value hidden within.

This is the part where, if not for you, there would be no transformation. Yes, you – who opened your heart and saved lives. Take a moment now to look at your own furry friend(s) and send thoughts of thanks to those who like you, saw the love within your companion(s) and took the time to take calls for help, go through applications, perform home visits, provide transportation, and medical attention. Then there are the foster families who secretly felt a pull at their heart strings as your drove off with their temporary charge, but knowing that the owners and companions were another family success story. You see, for every golden soul you save, you have also saved the soul of a fellow human whose life will be forever enhanced by your act of love and kindness.

Now more than any other economic time, we have the opportunity to make our collective goal of saving lives truly fill a need and touch hearts within our community. We need our monetary funds be able to not only maintain our current status, but also to step up to the plate and provide in any way possible for the increased influx of companions who lost their family only because their family lost their income or their home. We need to be able to assure those

who had to separate their family that we are here and dedicated to assuring there will be continued safety and love provided to the ones they could no longer provide for.

Please continue your donations in any way possible for you. Every penny is precious and goes completely into helping our rescued companions. We sincerely appreciate each and every donation of time and money. You have made GRRMF a formidable entity in the life of our community. Kudos to all of you and may we all remain strong in our commitment and continued success in our collective efforts.



Alicia was a puppy who was brought to a vet's office for euthanasia because her leg was broken. Luckily, the vet tech talked the family into calling GRRMF instead of ending this sweet golden puppy's life. Alicia required special orthopedic surgery on her leg but is doing wonderfully ... and by the time you read this, she will be in her forever home as her adoption is pending. She is a bundle of golden energy!



SAVE THIS DATE!

Put this date on your calendar!!!
The 2010 Annual

Rescue Reunion will be held Saturday, February 27, 2010 at Lake Parker Park in Lakeland Florida. We are currently looking for a volunteer to serve as Event Coordinator for the Reunion. We also need volunteers to help with all the activities. Please email us at info@grrmf.org if you are interested in helping with this fun event that helps raise money for needy golden retrievers! We also need great raffle items for our reunion. For other upcoming events, please check grrmf.org.

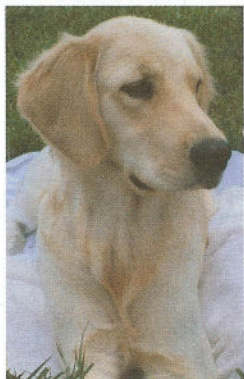
GOOD KIDS!

GRRMF is thankful to have many young supporters of our cause. These days seems like you only hear about the bad things kids do. But there are plenty of good deeds done by animal loving young people.

Two of GRRMF's most ardent supporters are Aaron and Daniel Kennon. Aaron (13 years old) started Operation Dogwalk when he was in 5th grade to help neighborhood residents that work all day and needed someone to walk their dog during the middle of the day and care for their pets while on vacation. Together, Aaron and his brother, Daniel (10 Years old), have kept Operation Dogwalk in business for over three years, donating most of the profits to the Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid Florida. They have also raised several hundred dollars for GRRMF through fundraisers and solicited donations. Aaron and Daniel have also joined their uncle in helping dogs at the Humane Society in Columbus, Ohio when they visit him there. The boys are also very active with other interests and still find time to support GRRMF. Aaron is on a robotics team, is a black belt Tae Kwon Do and plays cello in the Glenridge Chamber Orchestra. Daniel likes to write fiction, takes trombone lessons and is working on his black belt in Tae Kwan Do.



Left to right: Daniel and Aaron Kennon; Goldens: Candy (left), Sophie (middle above), Abby (middle below) and Lacy. Candy and Lacy are former fosters that the boys are doggy-sitting for the weekend. Sophie is a foster dog. And Abby is the Kennon's dog.



Another great group of kids is Julie Calman's preschool class who donated money to honor Parker. Each preschool class at Julie Calman's school was named to identify it, and Julie decided to call hers the Retrievers. A long-time lover of goldens, she incorporated the topic of care for animals in need, among her religious lessons about giving to the less fortunate. On Fridays, the children would bring in money to donate to a cause.

In the meantime, Julie had adopted Parker from GRRMF.

One day she surprised the children with a visit from the delighted dog. As the class fell in love with Parker, she heard excited comments, such as, "He's so fluffy!" and "He's hitting me in the head with his tail!" Within ten minutes, even the child who had never experience a big dog was enthralled. When he left, a little of Parker remained - a glow of happiness among the kids, and, you guessed it, a lot of dog hair.

In time, the Retrievers class had collected a goodly sum of money. In the Jewish faith, multiples of 18 are considered lucky, according to Julie. So when the donations hit \$36, she decided it was time to pick a worthy cause. The Retrievers decided to send their funds to GRRMF. Lucky for GRRMF! Thank you, Retrievers. You're good as gold.

Recently many friends in rescue have lost beloved dogs, or their human family members. It is so hard to deal with the loss of our furry friends, and even harder when we lose our fellow golden lovers. As many of you know, our Treasurer and long time volunteer Nancy Spears passed away in November. With twelve years of dedicated service, Nancy had

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Barbara Durham



many GRRMF records that had to be transferred to me, sorted, filed, etc. What a process to go through these records!!! Nancy was an impeccable record keeper and always kept our treasury records in perfect order. But I found some delightful things tucked away in this notebook or that: a dog biscuit recipe, a little notebook of jokes people had emailed her, clippings of stories about goldens, copies of emails I sent her in 1999(!!!) – it was like spending a few

days with her all over again. There were so many things from the early days of rescue it was like walking down memory lane. I had my box of kleenex handy because it was a sad and heart-warming process all in one. One of the essays I found was especially meaningful as we all are so busy day to day. Nancy was a gracious lady with a lot of wisdom. I thought I would share it with you all. We miss her very much.

Celebrate Life!!

Think freely. Practice patience. Smile often. Savor special moments. Live God's message. Make new friends. Rediscover old ones. Tell those you love that you do. Feel deeply. Forget trouble. Forgive an enemy.

Hope. Grow. Be Crazy. Count your blessings. Observe miracles. Make them happen. Discard worry. Give. Give in. Trust enough to take. Pick some flowers. Share them. Keep a promise. Look for rainbows. Gaze at stars. See beauty everywhere.

Work hard. Be wise. Try to understand. Take time for people. Make time for yourself. Laugh heartily. Spread joy. Take a chance. Reach out. Let someone in. Try something new. Slow down. Be soft sometimes.

Believe in yourself. Trust others. See a sunrise. Listen to rain. Reminisce. Cry when you need to. Trust life. Have faith. Enjoy wonder. Comfort a friend. Make some mistakes. Learn from them. CELEBRATE LIFE!

Author: Anonymous

WORLD'S GREATEST VOLUNTEERS!

GRRMF is thankful for all their volunteer support. We hope we've listed everyone. We will be recognizing our volunteers in newsletters twice a year. If we inadvertently left your name off of this list, please let us know at info@grrmf.org. Thank you!

Transport Volunteers

Sue Angle, Coordinator
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Linda Lullman
Tom & Gregg Eddie
Barbara Markowski
Maggie Duncan
Lori Hurd
Michelle Cain
Kimberly Donaldson
Wendy & Keith Erskine
Michelle Hartog
Jordan Seigel
Marvin Arkovich
Dave Robinson
Maggie Stambaugh
Connie Adams
Ray & Sue Angle
Marvin Arkovich
Jodie Bass
Hank & Janice Bogle
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Hettie Buck
Dinah Candler
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Teresa Farnsworth
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Carol Forsberg
John Foss
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Dennis Grace
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Linda Lane-Lantry
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Paul & Marlene Nesbitt
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Renee Duke, Adoption Coordinator
Sue Keiser Anderson
Ana Alvarez
Dave Dillman
Angie Weldon
Abby Lee
Mary Ann Newton
Richard Newton
Kevin Contessa
Agnes and David Balas
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Dorothy Lala
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Kara Heiselmeyer

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Hotline Volunteer ;
Kathy Bryne,
Kellyann Goring
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Jennifer Longman,
Kelly Ann Goring,
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Pat Matthews
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Judy Ladney
Newsletter Editor:
Deb Wilson

Volunteer Coordinator:

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Dan Hardy
Calendar & Eblasts:
Andrea Davis
Info email: Suzanne Rider
Mailing of foster supplies:
Kristie Molina

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Kerri Vorhies
Marcia McGovern
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Charlie & Jan Cauthen
Lori and Ken Cubbedge
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Gregg & Tom Eddie
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Rebecca & James Hite
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Mark & Kristine Molina
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Cheryl Pacheco
Mark and Melinda Pachtner
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Steven and Martha Pinnow
Kathy Rozzo
Melanie Ruggiano-Gallo
Jeanne Sheppard
Tara Spake
Sharon Stockman
Pam Strickland
Sandy Sumner
Mary Szydlowski
Amie H. Tishkoff
Kerri Vorhies
Larry & Angie Weldon
Leslie & Jim Wisnowski
Leah Wright

WANT TO VOLUNTEER?

Are you interested in volunteering for GRRMF? Please visit our website and fill out a volunteer application, or email info@grrmf.org for a copy. All GRRMF volunteers must have a signed volunteer application on file. If you have started volunteering and haven't sent one in, please do so! We need help in several areas including:

- Talented, experienced designer to assist our Website Director in creating pages for our website.
- Special volunteers to join our Intake Team – this is the team responsible for working with dogs being surrendered into our program. Involves phone/email contact with the public who are giving up their dogs, making arrangements for the time and place of surrender, and possibly some ground work including transporting to get dogs to GRRMF veterinarians.
- GRRMF volunteers that are talented writers are needed for creative stories for our newsletter – we are looking for suggestions – and stories you might write yourself – please email grrmfnewsletter@gmail.com
- We always need transport volunteers!
- Volunteers to run the rescue reunion – we need people for games, golden goods, raffle, food service – everything!

WHERE IS THE RAINBOW BRIDGE COLUMN?

We have moved Rainbow Bridge tributes to our website. If you have a GRRMF dog that has passed and you would like to send a tribute, please email info@grrmf.org.

GOLDEN ADOPTIONS!

Linus was 6 years old when he came to GRRMF because his owners split up and couldn't care for him. Barbie P. lovingly cared for him while we looked for just the right home. That home was with David L. and his mother who wanted a golden retriever after losing their dog. Lucky Linus settled right in and became the wonderful companion they were searching for.

Carson came to GRRMF when his owners divorced and neither could care for him. Lucia and Angelo E. were looking for a companion for their 5 year old female golden, Cooper. Originally they thought a female would be the perfect partner, but when 7 year old Carson came along, we thought he would be a great choice. They met him and evidently Carson and Cooper agreed. They get along great and enjoy sharing their days playing or just lounging around the house.

Seven year old **Halee's** family had financial problems and couldn't take her to the apartment complex they were moving to. So, GRRMF took her in and she was fostered by Rob and Amy K. When Karen and Charles H. decided to adopt an older gal, we thought Halee would be the perfect fit. And we were right. Karen writes that Halee has settled in well and they love her a lot. We love those happy endings!

Blake was one of the seven young goldens we took in when their owner/breeder died. After being wormed and neutered, we set out to find a family that could provide Blake with the love and guidance a young dog needs. The J. family wanted to add a dog to their pack and Blake filled the bill. He is loved by one and all and we're sure he enjoys his new home.

Three-year-old **Savannah** was heartworm positive and in a shelter that was short on space. When we heard of her plight, we offered to take her in. She was fostered by Jennifer K. who nursed her through heartworm treatments. Rosemary and Bill W. were looking for a four-legged friend and Savannah sounded like she'd fit right in. They report that Savannah is a little shy but settles in more every day. We're glad they're providing the patient and loving home Savannah deserves.

Chase was also one of the Dunnellon seven that came to us when a breeder died and his sister tried to find homes for his dogs. GRRMF stepped in and promised to find great homes for them. Kristen and Edward H. were looking for a pal for their 8 year old German Shepherd girl. They had the time and energy for a younger dog and thought Chase would keep Brandy young. Kristen writes, "Chase (his new name is Guinness) is doing very well! He is getting more comfortable in his new home. He and our German Shepherd get along well. He doesn't play with her yet, but she keeps trying to get him to play! When we go for walks, he loves to socialize with our neighbors, their kids and their dogs!"

Mr. Goldie Blue was a sweet boy who was adopted out and then returned to us. Nancy and Bert F. fell in love with this tall drink of water and added him to their household.



Connor was one of the Dunnellon seven-siblings that came to us when

their owner/breeder died. We treated all of the Dunnellon seven for hook worms and had them neutered and spayed before searching for their forever homes. Jeff and Caffie C. wanted to add a young golden to their family and when they met

Connor they knew he was the one for them. They're enjoying the antics, fun and love a young dog can bring and we're sure Connor is enjoying all the love they shower on him.

Copper Miles, an 8 year old, was another return due to family health issues. No matter. His foster mom Roberta M. fell in love with him and had to keep him. He has found his forever home.

Turned in by her owner, **Lyric** has a relatively rare disease – diabetes. It did not phase Ardyth H. at all. She was so excited to adopt her. She promised her sweet Lyric a lifetime of love and affection.

Timid little **Sawyer** was turned in by his owner who was losing his house. The frustration may have been taken out on Sawyer because he was afraid of being closed in a small space. His foster mom Tara S. worked with him to build his confidence. She also realized that Sawyer was becoming a member of the family and decided to adopt him. He is one happy boy!

Titan, a big 8 year old, came in with 10 year old Indie. Both were breeder dogs and the owner was moving and not taking them with him. Lynne H. fostered him and fell in love with the big man and asked to adopt. How could we not? Titan now has his forever home, and, Indie was adopted in May.

At 8 years old, **Striver** was losing his home. His owner had lost his job and could not care for him anymore. He was fostered by Leah W. and adopted by Joanne and Robert D. and does not need to worry about being left behind ever again.

At only 6 years old, **Sebastian** had already endured more than many dogs have. He was severely overweight (101 pounds!), losing much of his hair and an old leg injury had only made getting around that much harder. We stepped in and did two relatively

easy things to help him. First, foster parents Susan and Peter F. got him on an appropriate amount of good food and added green beans to help the weight come off. They also put him on a relatively inexpensive daily dose of Glucosamine and MSM. Sebastian started to feel better and look better. The loss of excess weight helped his joints. Adopted by Blake and Valerie G., Sebastian now goes to work every day with dad and is the official mascot of the business.

Josh is a handsome boy is only two years old and found as a stray. The good Samaritan called us and asked us to take him. He was Katie D.'s foster. She fell in love with him and knew that he would make a great addition to her family since he loves other dogs. Katie continues to foster since she knows her Josh will be fine with anyone.

Kirby's story is typical. The family was losing their home to foreclosure and there was no place for Kirby in the new place. He is a fine boy so when Jo and Mike B. were looking for a new member (their previous adopted golden Goldie had passed recently), Kirby was a perfect fit. He is only five years old so they have lots of years to love on him.



Rosie was found tied to a post outside of an animal

shelter. She was fostered by Char B. and then Charlotte W. and family came along looking for a companion for their golden, Homey. The golden girls are now fast friends. Charlotte writes: "Wanted to tell you that Rosie is the PERFECT dog for our family. She has fit into our routine like a champ. Such a polite one. Homey has perked up also so it has been GREAT all round." Sounds like Rosie has found the perfect family to love!

A TRIBUTE TO A TRULY GOLDEN DOG LOVER

By Val Battersby

Buster is a four year old was an owner turn in due to a lack of time and money to care for him. Buster is healthy and happy and has a new home with Linda S.

At four years old and unspayed, **Clare** is what we in rescue call a priority dog. While she is not ill, she does have the potential to make any rescue's job much more difficult. She could breed dozens of litters of puppies in her lifetime and none of them have to be pure goldens. Mix puppies have it harder than pure bred dogs and her staying unspayed is a ticking clock for rescues. First order of business was to get her spayed and the second order of business was to find her a family. That was the easy part. Jennifer M. scooped her up and took her home. A happy ending for all!

At only two years old, **Tiki** had already had multiple litters. She also was found at an animal shelter. A good Samaritan called us and got her to us. Now she will have no more litters and has a safe forever home with Roger S.

Bodie was rescued by someone from a breeding operation but ended up being too big for their home so the person called us. This big boy was not too big for his fosters Tom and Kellyann G. who ended up adopting him.

Brodie was only 8 months old and being pushed out due to foreclosure on the family home. This young man was fostered by Chris and Tommy M. and adopted by Mike H.

Parker, another young man at only 10 months old, was being displaced due to a divorce. Julie C. and family thought he was not only handsome, but a wonderful boy and adopted him as soon as he was ready.

Jilly was one of the Dunnellon Seven – seven dogs taken in from a breeding operation. She was only a year old and not spayed. We fixed that quickly and just as quickly she went to her new home with Ted and Diane H.

Kate is a sweet one year old, also part of the Dunnellon Seven. She was adopted to Barbara K. and Robert W.

Rudy was having it tough at nine years old. He used to be an indoor dog but then he was banished to the outside and with no fenced yard, he was wandering the neighborhood. It was not fair and not safe for him. His foster mom Susan S. decided that Rudy was a great addition to the family and adopted him. No more wandering for this boy!

Bambino is a loving young boy (less than a year old) was adopted out and then returned to us in a few months. It was not his fault – blame the economy! His orphan status was short lived. Prior adopters of Skipper, the G. family wanted a play buddy for him. Bambino fit the bill and also fit right in with the rest of the family.

Raven is a 15 month old boy – a great dog by all accounts. The person who turned him in said that he was working long hours and had no time for him. Fostered by Dawn and Dan and then adopted by John and Linda D., he has had a smooth transition to his new home.

Copper Martin is a wonderful boy who was found wandering in a senior community and was saved by a good Samaritan who did not want to take him to the shelter. At 6 years old, sometimes they can be considered too old for adoption at a shelter. Corrine L. did not think he was too old at all. She thought he was perfect and took him to her home to be loved and cared for forever.

Rick Battersby had his first experience with an adopted GRRMF dog when he rolled his wheelchair into the kitchen. He was a little late, and Darby Sapphire had already arrived. She jumped up onto his chair, and enthusiastically covered his face with kisses. Rick, having been used to the dignity of our first golden, was a little taken aback. He was even more surprised later when he got into bed, and received a full body press from Darby.

A few weeks later, he witnessed her mom being dragged on her face through the bushes at obedience class. He wasn't too sure about our wild child.



Over time, he grew to love Darby deeply. He had to spend a lot of time in bed, due to his illness, and Darby always remained pressed to his side. He called her his Nana, like the nurse dog in Peter Pan. We decided to adopt another GRRMF dog.

On the way back from adopting Gabriel downstate, Darby squeezed between Rick and me. She tried to climb in my lap to make sure Mom still loved her, even though we had taken in that big beautiful boy, who was sitting calmly on the back seat. We were on I-95, and I was driving.

Because he was quadriplegic, Rick couldn't throw the ball or play with the dogs in the usual way. Gabriel solved that problem. As soon as his dad rolled in, Gabe would run off. He was getting a toy. Dad's part was to roll after him, and say, "Give me that toy!" He would pretend to corner Gabe, leaving him just enough room to get past. Gabe would "escape", and so the game would go on.

A few weeks later, Rick helped me host our first golden swim party. He welcomed our guests, and watched in awe with the rest of us, as 22 GRRMF alumni jumped in the pool, played ball, and chased each other around the yard.

After that, we decided to foster. Rick always sincerely wanted to adopt every dog that we fostered. He made sure that he wasn't home when a dog left. Big softie. Then one day, an adorable little guy named Charlie arrived. Two hours later, Rick very firmly said, "Call up and say he's got a home." We adopted our third.

As Rick's illness progressed, he was hospitalized. He was really bummed out, because he was going to have to remain in the hospital over Thanksgiving. He was lying in bed, when he heard a thump, thump, thump. His first thought was, "I know that sound!" It was Gabe's tail. With the full permission of the charge nurse, a golden owner, Gabriel stayed with his dad in the hospital for two weeks, day and night. He made it feel a lot more like home for both of us.

Rick was never able to get out of bed after that. His three golden darlings devotedly kept him company to the last. Rick passed away on March 22, 2009. In lieu of flowers, it was requested that donations be made to GRRMF, the organization that had added so much joy to his life.

DONATIONS

Special thanks to all who continue to support us financially. Your generous hearts keep our program going! This list is for donations entered into our accounting system from April 1st – May 31st. Thank you! If you have a question about donating, email us at info@grrmf.org.

FOR PRINCESS:

Agnes Balas
Christine Brindle
Michael Farah
William Hale
HE Lengfeller
Barbara McCann
Joan Witt

IN HONOR OF:

Debra Johansson,
for Brodey
Julie Calman's Preschool
Class, for Parker
Jennifer Marshall, for
Aaron & Daniel Kennon

IN MEMORY OF:

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Tessie, Mulligan
Lee Deckard, for Beau,
Katie, Lex, Missy
Koren DeRusso,
for Carol Vogt
Nancy & Bob Ferrara,
for Connor
Julie Fox, for Macy
Linda Herron,
for Walter Pelkey
Debra Johansson,
for Alvin
Lisa Morgan, for Winnie
Linda & Harold Rhea,
for Breeze
Nicole Santapola, for Eli
on behalf of the MD
Anderson Cancer
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program
Connie Shepard,
for Sheba
Carol Snyder,
for Sunny Morley

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WOODY FUND

Lynda Alfson, for
GRRMF Diabetic Dogs

THE STORY OF NELLIE: ONE DOG WHO MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE EVERY DAY

by Sandy Sumner, GRRMF Adoption Coordinator

I have been volunteering for GRRMF for 10 years now. They have flown by pretty fast and I have seen a lot of changes over the years. One thing that



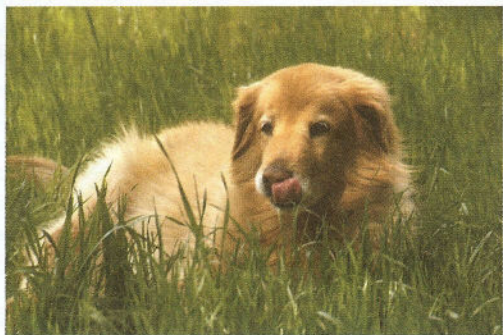
does not change is the capacity of people to love a dog that has had a past and to give that dog a rich and loving future. I work a lot with application review and one question on the app is "If you have any special requirements, please tell us here so that we can more carefully match you with the appropriate dog." Many people leave it blank, some have a color or gender preference and sometimes it can get pretty particular – height, weight, head shape, even

tail length! One time someone asked for a "well bred breeder dog so that I can do pet therapy". I asked the person what that meant and they said that only a well bred handsome golden has the temperament for something like that. He was going to go to a breeder but did not want to spend the time to train a puppy and basically wanted one breeder dog right out of the box ready to enter pet therapy. He even told me that if the dog had its CGC, that would help. We weren't able to help him find the dog he wanted for a variety of reasons. Anyone who knows me knows that my saying is that we are not a deli. You don't put in your order for a dog and a perfect match pops out on the other side ready to go. And the dog that was described above is the kind of dog that most people keep, not the ones that are surrendered to a rescue.

Last year I had the pleasure of being a foster mom for Nellie, one of a pair of goldens surrendered to us because one of the owners had passed away and the remaining spouse did not feel that she could handle these two big dogs. I did not know what to expect from 5 ½ year old Nellie. Was she a wild one? Would she knock me down as she came up to me, happy to see me? Nellie is none of those things. She is Velcro and loves to be next to you. She is happy and loving. I thought she was a sweet girl.

Now to find a home for her. Ellen R. was looking for a dog to do pet therapy. She wanted one that would be able to go to hospitals to see patients and bring a little cheer to their lives. Stroking a pet can reduce blood pressure, help speed up healing and just give someone in a tough situation a reason to smile for a while. Ellen's question to me was "Does Nellie wear outfits?". That was a new one for me. The biggest outfit my dogs get is a bandana (okay, so Scooby wears it as a Babushka, but that is a story for another day). I told her that I really did not know but Nellie's personality is such that if you wanted her to wear an outfit, it would be okay. Ellen came over, adopted Nellie, and the rest is history. She passed her CGC (Canine Good Citizen) and also her Therapy Dog (TDI) test. She is now a certified therapy dog. She has gone to hospitals to cheer up children and adults alike. She also goes to the Cancer Center. And you can see from the picture that she is right at home in any outfit that Ellen has for her.

Is she from a reputable breeder? Probably not. Is she a wonderful therapy dog? You bet. You don't have to have famous genes to be a good listener or sit there while someone tells you things that they can't tell another human being. You don't have to have famous genes to wag your tail when a little boy with no hair comes up to you in a wheelchair and wants to pet you. You don't have to have famous genes to sit with a mom whose child is undergoing chemo or a man who is confined to a wheelchair. You just need to be able to love. And that is what goldens are about – unconditional, never ending love. Ellen gave Nellie a new and wonderful life and Nellie passes her love on to others who need a friend. You don't need special genes – you just need a big heart.



GOLDENS RULE!

IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE TO THIS ONE

by Sandy Sumner, GRRMF Adoption Coordinator

Just about every dog lover knows the story of the Rainbow Bridge ... dogs who have passed away wait at the bridge for their owner to join them. Another favorite of mine is the Starfish Legend, the story where the young man walks the beach tossing the stranded starfish back into the water. An older man comes up and admires his tenacity but says "There are so many starfish. Couldn't you spend your time doing something more productive? Do you really think it will make a difference?" The boy looks at the starfish in his hand, smiles and says simply "It makes a difference to this one."

Such simple but powerful words. We know that in any rescue, you can't save every one. But we can save this one. Or that one. And it can make all of the difference to the one that we are able to save.

I remember a few years ago walking into a pet supply store and seeing a rescue group trying to adopt animals. They had kittens doing acrobatics in tall cages and puppies wriggling all over inside of an X-pen. There were young dogs and cats as well. No seniors or disabled pets. At the time, it did not resonate with me. I was mesmerized by the puppies and kittens. So were lots of other folks and many left the store with a little pup or kitten in their arms. I never thought that older dogs needed to be rescued as well.

When I started to get involved with GRRMF ten (!) years ago, I started with doing some paperwork for the group and quickly decided that I wanted to foster. I expected some young sweet dog who would get snatched up quickly. My first foster? Molly, an 8-year-old golden that looked closer to 12. The family just dropped her off without a backward glance. And she did not look at them either. I was stunned by their lack of emotion and could completely understand hers. That was ten years ago. There have been roughly 175 fosters cross my threshold since that day. And no, Molly did not get adopted. A few months after I started to foster her, she became ill and

it was discovered that she had an enlarged heart. She passed in my arms at the vet's office.

As you all know, we rely completely on donations. **We are 100% volunteer.** No one gets paid and your entire donation goes toward helping the dogs get adopted or educating the public on the breed. People pay a modest fee when a dog gets adopted and it helps to offset the costs incurred when the dog comes into rescue (shots, medications, heartworm treatment, spay or neuter). But what happens when someone turns a dog into us and it can't get adopted? What then?



Here is the story of Mac, a nine year old golden whose family loved him, but had run out of money to treat some mysterious condition that he had. It had to do with some blockage in his nasal area. No amount of antibiotics would work and they could afford no more tests. We took in Mac and felt that if anyone could help him we could. But we knew that there was a good chance that he would not be adoptable. We took him to a specialist and he had an MRI to see if there was anything to be done medically. There isn't. So we can give him the next best thing – good days until his quality of life is gone. He now lives in a foster home with people who love him, canine brothers and sisters who entertain him and keep his mind active and his heart light. He doesn't know he is sick so he enjoys every day.

Is Mac the only one? No, there was Cassidy who was so sick and neglected that her body could not tolerate the heartworm medicine that was supposed to help her. We had a foster home ready to take her for whatever time she had left. There was Rusty, a two year old golden we knew was terminal. He had a bacterial infection that was literally eating up his insides. The woman would not have him in her house because he periodically would leak blood from his backside. We took him in and put him in a hospice foster home. He lasted two weeks

but those two weeks were spent in air conditioning, sleeping on a couch and being loved. There was Big Miles, who was terminal due to a severe bone cancer in his back leg. There was Casey, the megaesophagus dog that had a severe digestive issue that we knew would shorten his life and make him pretty much unadoptable. And there was Buffy and Timmy and Brantley and Nicholas and Hunter, and so many more, that we knew would not be adopted but could be saved, if only for a short while. We could try to help them have a quality of life or at least put an end to their suffering. I am lucky enough to be one of a handful of hospice fosters, those who take in the golden retrievers that have no medical options. We give them a loving home for the time they have left. We give them a soft and cool place to lay their heads, bowls of good food, and snuggles and cuddles and all of the love that they can absorb until they tell us it is time.

And yes, I fostered Rusty and Miles, and now I have Mac. It is what I say over and over. They give me more than I can ever give them. They give me unconditional love, some giggles with their antics and a gratefulness for what they have that only a rescue can understand. Those eyes can look into your soul and tell you that they are thankful and love you for what you give to them.

We can't adopt out every dog that comes in. Some are so sick that we can just make their suffering end. Some have limited time left and we make that remaining time as full as it can be. We consider ourselves a rescue, not just a place where adoptable dogs come in and get adopted out. And as long as the donations come in, we can continue to be a rescue in the purest sense of the word.

Can we save every dog that is out there? No, but we can save Mac or Rusty or Casey, if only for a while. We can make a difference to that one.

GO GOLD!

Do you have ideas for articles, subjects, or pictures for our newsletter?
We'd love your help!! Email our newsletter editor at: grrmfnewsletter@gmail.com.

SEEKING CORPORATE SPONSORS FOR OUR 2010 CALENDAR

We are currently seeking corporate sponsors to underwrite the cost of producing our 2010 Calendar. That way all the proceeds can go towards rescue without GRRMF having to pay for the cost of printing the calendars. Sponsors will be featured in the calendar and will be recognized in our newsletter and on the website. If you or a company you know of would be interested, please contact us at info@grrmf.org and we will have our Corporate Sponsorship Program volunteer contact you.

HELP US FIND FOREVER HOMES FOR ALL OUR GOLDENS!



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All memberships and donations are tax-deductible.

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