



"A Golden Retriever Can Change Your Life!"™

# Golden GRRRRowl

A registered non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization

August 2020

## From the Streets to the Fifth Floor and Beyond: A Therapy Dog's Story

by Clark Myers

I would like to thank Robert Louis Stevenson for writing, "A friend is a gift you give to yourself." Oakley is even more of a gift, as he is a friend to so many others.

Oakley arrived from Turkey on flight #9. He was a little cream Golden with no real story – except the one he shares with other Turkey Dogs: abandoned at a young age, wandering the streets in search of food and shelter, and finally getting swept up into a shelter.



### From Turkey Dog to Therapy Dog

We had just lost our beloved Bernie, and my wife Carol was hitting the GRRR website looking for the next blessing in our lives. Yep, there was Oakley, a Golden Angel too sick to adopt. The GRRR folks let us foster him to see if and how he would get well again. With the help of Aspen Meadows Veterinary Specialists, we found ways to fix his parasite infestation and his inability to process protein and B vitamins. He got a second chance to live, and with us, a forever home.

When he finally was well, given his temperament, personality, and kindness, we decided to enter him to train to become a Certified Therapy Dog. I would serve on his team. In a few months he earned his vest!

As a therapy dog, Oakley brings joy to three distinct health care facilities. All residents and staff know our visit day as "Oakley Monday." The first facility is an assisted living residence, which supports people who face challenges that make it difficult for them to live and thrive alone. The second is a memory care facility that is home to people with moderate to advanced dementia, including Alzheimer's disease. This facility is locked and staffed at all hours. The third is our Community Hospital.

Oakley Mondays start with a visit to the Alta Vita Assisted Living Centre. We need to be there before "Ice Cream Hour" for two very important reasons. First, dogs are not allowed in the food service area where the treats are consumed. Second, during this hour, Oakley's sole focus is not on the happiness of the residents, but on when that scoop of butter brickle will hit the floor.

When we enter, we are greeted by the residents who gather around and pet Oakley for a while, then we are off to the folks who seem to be more alone. Oakley is famous for sniffing them out, then sitting next to their chair and leaning against it with his head on their knee. This is not recommended with an unlocked wheel chair, as I have often chased and secured the chair moving away against the weight of his "lean." We greet the person with, "Hi, would you like to make a new furry friend?"

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**“The aide had  
cleaned up the tissues,  
and Oakley had  
cleaned up the sadness.”**

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### Hearing Their Stories, Warming Their Hearts

Very quickly they begin with stories of their lives, their dogs and how much I remind them of their son, or any number of stories. The gentle pets and rubs often lead to his “position,” where he slides down and flips over with all four in the air for a belly rub. He brings the house down.

This time is important to all of us – Oakley, me and the residents alike. The residents get a moment of Golden love and a break in the monotony of the day. Oakley gets to talk to the chef, who is Turkish, so Oakley actually responds to commands – in Turkish, of course. More importantly Oakley and I get a little warmup for what lies ahead: the Memory Care facility.



The memory care facility is a short walk from Assisted Living, but a lifetime journey for the residents. As we enter, the receptionist gives us badges and unlocks the door for us to enter the communal area. For the next hour to hour and a half, Oakley and I are in another world. He loves these people, as they can sit and pet him for very long stretches and don't mind if he is in his “position.” More than that, the overworked, emotionally stressed staff of nurses, aides and helpers need Oakley perhaps more than the residents.

One Oakley Monday we entered the communal area only to be stopped by one of the aides. She looked at Oakley, then at me, then thanked us for coming and explained that there had been a woman in one of the meeting areas who needed help. She had been sitting at a large communal table by herself crying all day. She had not eaten breakfast or lunch and would not talk to anyone. We were led into the room and Oakley immediately spotted her. She sat alone with tear soaked tissues all over the table, chair and floor. I had no idea what to do next. I didn't need the idea... Oakley pulled me gently toward her and sat quietly next to her and began to lean. All I could think of to say was, “Hi, would you like to make a new furry friend?” The woman did not acknowledge Oakley's presence, but looked up at me. Between sobs and tears, she managed to get out, “She hates me, she won't see me, I don't know where she is, my daughter hates me.”

While her hand slipped over Oakley's head and she began rubbing his long silky ear, I repeated my “Hi” greeting and she looked at me, then Oakley, and managed to say, “My daughter has dogs.” Caught off guard, I said, “what kind?” “Brown” she responded. I asked if they were big like Oakley. She said, “No, little and they come to play with me.” My next foolish statement was, “you mean here?” “No” she replied, “my daughter brings them and we go outside.”

From that point on and for about 15 minutes, she managed to pull many partial memories together, completely out of context, as a conversation with me. Finally Oakley spotted another man, alone, with his head down, and began pulling away to visit him. As we left the woman, I looked back and watched her still sitting peacefully staring out the window onto a warm summer day. The aide had cleaned up the tissues, and Oakley had cleaned up the sadness.



## Up to the Fifth Floor and the Oncology Ward

Longmont United Hospital is a very different story. Oakley and I had to go through more extensive training to graduate and get to visit the floors.

Upon graduation, we were given the 5th Floor. One of the wards there is oncology. As we enter, Oakley heads straight for the nurses' station. He knows I have to stop and check in, but mostly he can feel what those folks are going through and gets pets and hugs galore before we hit the patient rooms.

One day, we were going room to room visiting patients. I knocked on one of the doors and didn't get a response, so as usual, I sanitized my hands and Oakley led the way in. I was halfway through, "Hi, how would you like..." when I took a second to look at the woman in the bed. Her eyes were wide open, but she was not responsive. Oakley had already moved to leaning and putting his head on her bed waiting for the petting to begin. It did not.

Sitting in a chair next to the bed was her husband with his elbows on his knees and his face in his hands. I apologized for the interruption. He looked up and saw us and said, "No, please stay, my wife was a veterinarian and she will know you are here." Then he began petting Oakley and tears began to run down his cheek. All I could say was, "I am so sorry." He looked up from Oakley and assured me that her life had been fulfilled. We said our goodbyes and left the room.

When we got outside, Oakley turned, faced the door and sat down. I got down on one knee and put my arms around him, knowing that perhaps a person's last feeling was that of the presence of a true Golden angel.

## Better Than a Six-Pack

Oakley and I have amassed many heartwarming stories in and out of health care facilities. My favorite still has to be the time he volunteered to be stress relief for the University of Colorado Law School graduates. Imagine coming out of a 3-hour final exam, bleary-eyed and exhausted, only to be greeted by a white furry Golden with his paw up. One young lady told me that hugging Oakley was far better than the six-pack she had waiting at home.

I know he has made many lives better, or at least happier, by being a Certified Therapy Dog. Oakley has come a long way from wandering the streets of Istanbul to bringing joy to those who seldom find it. His life is better for what he does, but nothing like what he has done for mine.

We are now in the time of Covid-19. Therapy Dogs are not allowed in the health care facilities. Oakley has very little human interaction and it is hard on him. He has taken to loitering around the Cave Girl Coffee Shop in hopes the baristas or customers will come out and pet him. However, it does keep him prepared for reentry into the world when closures are relaxed. We both look forward to that day. 💙

*Note: Oakley's vet, Dr. Scott Carpenter, has moved to another town. We had to select a new vet for him. On his first appointment, we asked to check his blood work to see how he was doing. Unfortunately, his albumin, B12 and folate are very low. We are giving him B12 injections and folate supplements. We meet with his internist the first week in August to see how he is and what we need to do next. He's made it this far and he is a fighter. We know he will get better. He'll amaze us again.*



**Oakley working his magic to de-stress CU Law students after final exams.**





# Recent Rescues

Hello GRRR Friends!

It's almost been a whole year since we brought our beautiful Maddie girl home and we could not love her more! She's been the perfect addition to our family, keeping her rambunctious younger "brother," Cody, occupied and in line when necessary. They play together constantly and bring us so much laughter every day. The two are literally inseparable, and while Cody can be annoying, Maddie is very tolerant and sweet with him. We also have two kitties who aren't the doggies' biggest fans, but Maddie never bothers them.

We go to the dog park just about every morning (weather permitting) and Maddie is very popular with humans and dogs alike – the constant word the humans use to describe her is "sweet," which describes her perfectly! Her favorite pastimes include fetch and catch with a ball, dissecting stuffy toys with squeakers, chewing giant bully sticks (she is quite the power-chewer for sure!) and snuggling with her humans.

It's hard to believe it has been just a year (her Gotcha Day is June 29), because it feels like she's been with us forever! We appreciate all the support we received from GRRR at the beginning as we were adjusting to our newest family members. We are proud to tell everyone about your wonderful organization.

Thanks so much for all you do!

Tonia and Steve Lowe



Hi there,

I hope you are all well and in good health. We adopted our loving Golden Retriever, Maggie (formerly Dotty) about 1.5 months ago, and she has been such a sweet addition to our family. She loves long walks by the creek, playing fetch in the yard, and sleeping as close as possible to her Golden brother, Toby. She also just loves any form of attention – even getting her teeth brushed. She is so gentle, easy to train and eager to please – we feel like we hit the jackpot!

I could go on and on about how much we love her, but I think the picture says it better.

Thanks for all you do,

Devon Booth



Greetings,

We adopted Coconut the Golden/Great Pyr mix last June. His official name is Sheriff Coconut James, but we call him Coconut or Coco for short.

He just turned one. He's a very loving gigantic lug of a guy. We are grateful to have him!

Jen and Jim LaFond





Dear GRRR:

Today is our Cookie's Gotcha Day! She was from TD9, we think. Her nickname is Cookie Monster, but she is so sweet and smart!

Quick story: She has had rattlesnake avoidance training and it really paid off yesterday. We were walking on the street not far from our house and suddenly she just stopped, would not move. She tried to turn around and pull me. We looked just ahead not 15 feet and there was a very large rattler. Yikes! I would have stepped right on it if she had not stopped!

Thank you Cookie! We love you! And thank you GRRR!

Karen and Jack Simmons



Hi GRRR:

I hope everyone is doing well. I just wanted to send a quick note letting you know Ruckus is doing great. Last weekend he helped Walker with his Boy Scouts National Camp-in. As you can see, he was a big help.

Thanks,

Val Myers



Hi Everyone!

Our girl, Nala, will be 1 tomorrow. We have had her about 2 months and she couldn't be more loved! She is a real snuggle bug, smarty pants and mischief maker who has settled right in with her 11-year-old brother, Ezzy.

She often conks out on us after a hard day playing with stuffies, taking car rides and walks, and most recently climbing the pool rocks and playing in the water. She is a real joy that came into our pack at the perfect time, so THANK YOU for picking us for her forever family.

The Steinitzes



Dear GRRR:

My husband Will and I adopted Winston back in October. We still don't know how we got so lucky to be chosen to be his family! He has the most loving and bubbly little personality. His favorite activity is playing with his older brother, Remington. He also greatly enjoys fetching tennis balls, going for walks through the neighborhood, and taking naps in the backyard when the sun is shining.

We cannot thank you enough for matching us together. It has been such a blessing!

With love and gratitude,

Amanda and Will Trumbo





# Recent Rescues



Hello GRRR:

We are thoroughly enjoying our new addition to the family. Annie (formerly Rachel) has settled in and is enjoying learning new places and activities, but not so many new people as of yet as we stay at home. She loves the outdoors, especially playing with a tennis ball. Though she doesn't play fetch yet, she throws the ball with her mouth, runs to roll on it and then throws it up again.

Watching her discover new things has been amazing – from the TV to flowers, chiming clocks, fireplace, piano music, etc. Even walking on a leash was a fun new adventure.

She is a joy and we are forever grateful to GRRR for giving us the opportunity to add Annie to our family.

Best wishes to everyone at GRRR,

Karen and Bill Elkjer



Hi GRRR:

Bella (formerly Iris) is doing great! She has come a long way in the last year from a pup who didn't know her name, didn't know any commands, couldn't figure out how to go up or down stairs, and didn't know how to get into or out of the car. She has a fun and joyful spirit. Bella has become a great running, walking and hiking buddy – she is super athletic and always up for an outdoor adventure or car ride.

Prior to the COVID era I was taking Bella to work with me and she loved all the attention and did really well in an office environment for such a young dog. Now she is enjoying having both of her humans working from home much more which means she is always part of the team. Our daily walks and hikes with her are one of the only parts of the day that feel pre-COVID normal. Bella also has a huge personality and she is a giant goof. She makes us laugh all the time at her antics.

We are thrilled that she has become an integral part of our family – thank you GRRR for helping Bella find her way to us!

Best,

Lisa, Anjee and Bella

Hello GRRR:

We adopted Ziggy last August and he has done just great. We love him so much. He also loves his sister Daisy Mae a lot.

Dana Syder





Dear GRRR:

My 4-legged adoptee came with the name Rocky. He is a "Golden Shepherd." I didn't plan on adopting so soon after my Golden prince, Jessie Golden Bear, died unexpectedly at the young age of 9-½ from metastatic lung cancer on 12/16/19.

Little did I know that the mahogany-chestnut-golden-copper-ebony prince I had just adopted would be the One for me and I would be the Mother for him. Skills I have amassed over the last 40 years in working with foster kids are now used every day with my new pup. I saw a bit of his PTSD as he did not want to go in the building and didn't want to get into or out of the car. I finally figured out a strategy that gave him a sense of control and safety: I closed the garage door, opened all of the car doors and left the door into the house open too, so Romeo could choose when to exit the car and come into the house.

Romeo is the most loving dog I've ever had. He has been amazing in his ability to give and receive love. His eye contact should be filmed so humans learn what true eye contact is. I know he has a confident spirit despite whatever happened to him before GRRR got him. He is also wonderful with clients as I do canine assisted psychotherapy, and he is co-therapist par excellence. Thank you GRRR. I can't wait to bring Romeo to functions. He loves all dogs and all people.

If I had to sum up in one sentence how I have helped Romeo heal from his PTSD, it would be this: I invite him to things. I don't force him, but lovingly inviting him almost always enables him to say "yes" to what I ask. By doing this, I feel so loved that I am a better person just because of Romeo. Sometimes I sing to him: "I love you more today than yesterday, but not as much as tomorrow" (hit song from the 70s), and he sings it back with his eyes. Thank you!

Suzanne Carter



Dear GRRR:

I can't tell you how much I love Beasley! I am so thankful every day to have him with me. He's doing great. In the month he's been with me, he's lost 5 pounds (woo hoo!) and we're still working on his weight (and mine!). We go for walks every day and he's a great walker.

Beasley comes with me everywhere. I bought some pet steps so he can get into the back of my teeny little car and he picked it up right away. I've started working in the yard and he's with me every step of the way. He'll just lie down and watch. He's so nice with Bella, my cat, and the two of them "play" and get along so well. He's already met two of his cousins (and he has four more to meet), and everyone got along perfectly. All in all, I am so grateful you thought of me for Beasley. He's just perfect! Thank you so much!

Barb Engle



Dear GRRR:

Here's our boy Winston...doing better every day as he learns to trust his humans.

Thank you, GRRR!

The Ely Family





# Recent Rescues



Good Morning,

We adopted the 8-week-old pup Hazel (now Winnie for *Winnie the Pooh*) last July and she has been the best addition to our family! She and her sister, Mani, have created a loving bond. They love to play chase and hide and seek. Winnie has become a loving lap dog, gets along great with the cat, going to work with Sam, and taking the ball from Mani when she plays fetch. They are so funny together and we are so blessed to have Winnie in our family.

Thank you for choosing us to be a part of your family for the second time (we adopted a Golden about 14 years ago until she passed a year ago). Continue the fantastic work you all do for all the dogs.

Thank you,

Lanier Johnson



Hello GRRR Team,

Shaula is doing so well and has adapted to her new home flawlessly. She loves walks to the park, exploring the mountains, and drinking from the lakes. J and I are so impressed with Shaula and agree that we really lucked out finding her. Thank you for everything you do. We all appreciate your hard work and dedication to brightening all of our lives.

Thanks,

J, Juslena and Shaula



Hi GRRR:

We adopted Jordy (formerly Hank) in mid-March. Jordy is our third Golden rescue and second GRRR rescue.

Jordy was a very fearful puppy and we spent the first month in "rehab" creating a safe, loving, and predictable home environment for him.

Well, his inner Golden is coming out more and more every day. He has come so far in the past month! He will make eye contact with us, seek us out for affection (loves to cuddle), and is no longer startled by every little household noise. He loves our little training sessions and has learned to sit, stay, and come. He enjoys baths, being brushed, and getting his teeth brushed!

Jordy has a neighbor friend that he plays with a couple of times a week (a 2-year-old confident Golden girl). I think this play time has helped him gain some confidence. We are still working on overcoming his fear of passing cars and trucks on our neighborhood walks. But, as we have learned with rescues, patience and positive experiences usually help them become comfortable. We just love this Golden guy.

Linda and Michael Tieman

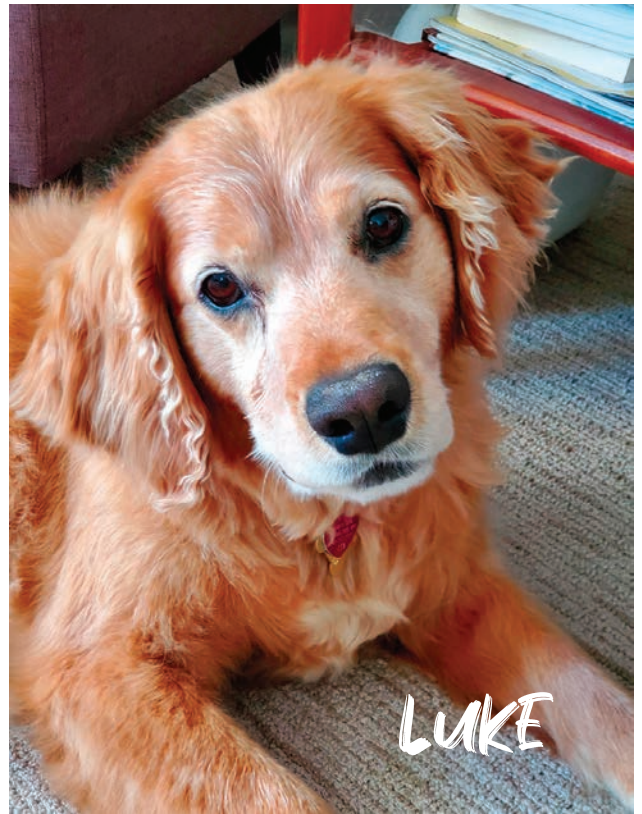




Dear GRRR:

We adopted Bear (formerly Atlas) from GRRR in March. He has settled in and is doing great! Bear is so smart and has learned so many things in such a short period of time. He loves to go for walks in the neighborhood, hike in the mountains, and go everywhere we go in the car with us. He is an amazing dog and we love him so much! Thank you for the wonderful addition to our family!

Todd and Karen Marquez



Dear GRRR:

We brought Luke home Sunday, June 7th. We are feeling like he may approve of us as his new family.

Love, John and Trudie Skaradowski

Hi GRRR:

Sammy and Abby (formerly Annabelle) are thriving with us. Sammy remains a shy fellow, but such a love! He'll come and put his head on my knee when I'm sitting and just ask to be petted. And petted. And petted. He's definitely the follower and not the leader of the pair.

We refer to Abby as our party animal. She is always up for playtime, pulling stuffies out of the basket three minutes after they've been put back. She seems to prefer hopping from Point A to Point B rather than simply walking, certainly belying her 9-1/2 years. Her face is showing a little more grey than Sammy's because of her slightly darker coloring. Both dogs regularly get compliments when we're out on the trails near here, and we're out several times a week.

Since we adopted this pair in January 2019, we've done a lot of hiking near home and in mountains and woods. They've camped with us several times and saw elk far closer than I'd have liked, but they stayed right where they were (they were also leashed, but not pulling at all). The humans simply froze until the elk walked through the campground. They're always ready to go somewhere, anywhere, as long as it's with us. Putting shoes on with two big dogs in my face can be a fun challenge. We've celebrated both dogs' birthdays with special cakes and a "party" with our daughter's two dogs. We also had another celebration for their "gotcha day" in January.

Thank you for connecting us with these two fabulous additions to our family. And thank Mary for us for suggesting a bonded pair (our first time ever having two dogs at once, by the way - it just means more dog hair to decorate clothes and furniture).

Ann and Tom Baker, Sammy and Abby, and cats Henry and Lulu





# Recent Rescues

Hello!

I adopted Rubia almost 4 months(!) ago. She is doing wonderfully! My partner and I love Rubia to pieces, and she seems to be very happy – always smiling, that's what the neighbors say. We have a patio that is safe for her to be out on, and she enjoys being outside and watching the squirrels/bunnies/ducks that reside in the neighborhood. She is most excited for her morning walk! If she's not on the patio or snuggling with one of us, she's napping upside-down in whatever peculiar spot she can find.

We've been working with a trainer Rubia she walks very nicely on a leash now. Our next step will be to train her on an e-collar, which will help with her recall and finally allow her to be off leash. She loves training! She loves to please! And she's so smart! We haven't gotten the DNA test results yet, but we're fairly certain she's half Border Collie/half Golden Retriever, and it's been really interesting to see those border collie characteristics in her. I've loved to see her grow in her time here, and I'm even more excited to see where we'll be a year from now. Rubia snuggles just as good as ever, and I've been so thankful to have her, especially with the shelter-in-place. It would've been a lot harder to socially distance without her.

Marietta Jones



Hello GRRR family!

Ralphie has settled into his new home and we are getting along famously. He is such an affectionate and unique companion. Ralphie is truly a blessing from the Lord! I'm not certain who rescued who in this family, but we are both so thankful to you for pairing us together.

Each day is a new adventure with Ralphie, which begins with his smiling face waking me at approximately 6:15 for our morning walk. He is my alarm clock! He loves his walks and is so well behaved that he receives compliments from other walkers along the way. Ralphie has truly amazed me by how well he obeys commands, which leads me to believe he received some type of training. He is also more comfortable traveling in my vehicle and has come a long way since that first time.

*This is Ralphie checking in! My new mum and I have had a good bonding time. I like it here and feel safe in my forever home! I get to do a lot of my favorite things – going for walks, playing with my toys, getting good food and treats, sniffing for bunnies and getting lots of love, to name a few. My mum says I'm a blessing and an answer to prayer, so I try to be on my best behavior wherever we go. I always get compliments! I also met some new friends, two of them look like me!*

Blessings to all, June Whipple

Dear GRRR:

We adopted Kaydo on July 6th last year. He has become a wonderful member of our family as we went through training in Eagle, Colorado. He loves to hike and usually gets four miles a day, and more on the weekend.

What a blessing.

Jeanne and John Alexander







Dear GRRR:

Never in our wildest dreams when we adopted Bella from GRRR at the age of seven did we imagine we would be lucky enough to have her this long. What a blessing!

She does have cancer and is extremely hard of hearing but still seems happy and comfortable.

Ruth French



Dear GRRR:

Thank you for getting in touch with us. We love our little girl, Hannah!

She is slowly learning to swim, going from being just a wader, to going a little further out into the water each time. :)

Thanks, Amy and Tom Urban

## Happy 16th Birthday Bella!

Dear GRRR:

Happy 12th Birthday, Jasmine! Here's an update on my dear Jasmine, adopted from GRRR two years ago at 10 years of age. I'm lucky to know her exact birthday....July 29, and we're getting ready for a virtual party with family.

Jasmine is the sweetest and kindest dog one can imagine. While my mother was in home hospice, Jasmine would lie next to her bed, ready for some petting whenever Mom felt the urge to pet her. When I slept in a chair during the night, Jasmine was at my side. The hospice workers loved her as well and allowed her to stay in the room while they were taking care of my mother. After my mother passed, Jasmine didn't really want to go into her room for a few weeks, but she now spends time there with me. Actually, Jasmine has taken over the entire house and yard, of course, and guards her "estate" from neighborhood cats. She is not interested in toys, she is determined not to learn to fetch, and she is not interested in the swimming pool I bought - thinking that ALL Golden Retrievers want to swim. We spent time at my nephew's house in Florida - she wasn't interested in his pool either. I had an agility bar for my previous dog, but Jasmine will have nothing to do with it...won't even walk over the bar when it is on the ground - she walks around it.

Jasmine and I have always spent so much time together as I was teaching only part time two nights a week, but going online because of Covid has made us constant companions. I used to call her my Velcro dog, but now I think I'm her Velcro guardian. She's never more than two feet from me. The photo is of Jasmine on HER couch...we have matching loveseats so she can either sit with me or on her own.

Jasmine is also a wonderful traveling companion - we visited seven states last summer and had three major road trips planned for this summer before the virus. I am so disappointed that the Gala cannot be held in person this year, but I hope everyone will continue to be strong supporters for our canine friends.

I cannot thank Mary Kenton enough for choosing me for Jasmine and Roberta Miller for bringing us together. And I can't thank GRRR enough for sheltering so many wonderful Golden Retrievers. Much love to GRRR from both of us!

Margaret Crawford





# Recent Rescues

Dear GRRR:

We adopted Buddy at the end of January. He had heart worm so started his injections shortly after we adopted him. The pandemic hit shortly after that so we all have been quarantining together! His social life has not been very exciting because of all this but he has been such a wonderful dog to have during this time!

Now that Buddy can be out and about we have been on many long walks discovering the neighborhood, trying to chase bunnies and squirrels. He gets pretty excited when people come to the house. And hopefully as time goes on this will improve.

Buddy loves his "stuffies" and constantly is surrounded by all his toys! I've never had a dog that wouldn't rip them apart on first sight! But amazingly he has not! We are learning about his many quirks... he doesn't like any kind of hissing noise like tea kettles boiling, and steam irons, but with trainer Ted Terroux's help, he has come a long way!

Thanks ,

Jane Baker



Dear GRRR:

Our wonderful girl Quita (formerly Rosie) is doing really well. We're well aware of her limitations now. Quita loves to hunt squirrels. She will patiently wait and watch for these little pests to make their appearance. Water is not something she relishes. We're trying to get her to swim but she wants nothing to do with it. We'll keep plugging away; we know how much Goldens love swimming and she does enjoy playing with all the dogs at the reservoir. And sunning herself...there is nothing better than an afternoon nap, in the grass, in the sun.

One thing we've noticed when she was first with us is that she wasn't playful, wouldn't touch a ball, and just seemed detached. It was probably her defense and uncertainty as to what this new life was about. Well, she has blossomed, and a playful, affectionate, loving, ball playing, goofy Golden Retriever has emerged.

She's a Golden gem. We are so fortunate.

Katie Patchin

## RECENT STATS - January 1 - June 30, 2020:

Number of Dogs Placed:	113
\$ Spent on Medical Needs:	\$58,094

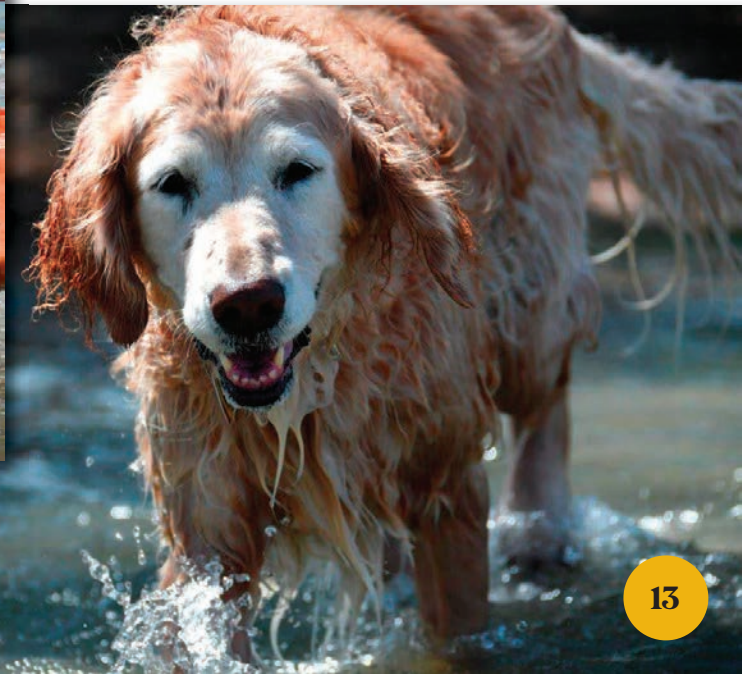


# Annual Rescue Reunion Picnic

**The annual Picnic at the Boulder Reservoir is scheduled for Saturday, Sept 12 at Phoebe's Place (not Boulder Reservoir...we're bummed too) but like everything else, we don't know if that will happen.**

**We will be sending out e-blasts with updated info, and also check website for status: [goldenrescue.com](http://goldenrescue.com)**

**Enjoy the photos from 2018...  
we'll be back at the lake next year!**



**Awesome photos by Sherrie Stille**



# A Dog's Journey Series-Tinkerbell

by Jeannie Miller

Meet sweet, petite, little Tinkerbell. She is our featured former breeding dog that we have selected to follow on her journey to a happy life – one she so deserves. Tinkerbell was rescued in mid-March when our crack team of Steve Schmidt and Mark Springston drove the rescue van to Wheaton, Missouri to pick up four dogs that GRRR had obtained from commercial breeders.

Steve describes arriving at the auction house and seeing the dogs huddled in their cages. They knew we were getting three young dogs (under two) and one older dog – a 4-year-old female. When Steve peered into the cage holding Tinkerbell, who was just a number at that stage, he saw a very petite, light gold-colored dog who wouldn't look at him and was just terrified. He assumed she was probably the youngest dog because she is so small. No, it turns out that Tinkerbell is four years old. She is just a little girl weighing only 40 pounds. She has the cutest black nose, soft wheat-colored fur and adorable paws.

Being 4 and an unspayed breeding female means Tinkerbell has had at least three litters of puppies in her short life. Tink (as I now call her) came from a breeder in Texas that we do not know a lot about. This particular breeder is known to buy, sell and breed 14 different breeds of dogs. This is a sign of a true commercial breeding operation and most likely means lots of dogs in small pens being treated, at best, like livestock. When Steve went to get Tink from her cage, she cowered in the very back and would not look at him. She was shaking in total fear. Steve gently picked her up, talking to her softly and telling her it would be all right. She repaid his kindness by letting loose and pooping on him! Poor little girl was just so scared.

As you can probably guess, Tink was very quiet on the long ride back to Colorado. She stayed in the very back of her crate and would not even look up or take any water when they stopped for a break. When they arrived at Phoebe's Place, Steve again had to carry Tink to the play yard where she could get out on the grass (maybe for the first time in her life) with the other dogs. We quickly learned just how shy and withdrawn this beautiful little girl is. She found a corner in the yard and huddled there.



Once in the kennel, she would not come inside even when it got really hot. She cowered in the corner when anyone came near her. Tinkerbell clearly has not had very much human or even dog contact (other than with her puppies). She is very afraid of everything she sees and hears. She trembled most of the time for the first few days after she arrived. Most likely hers was a solitary existence in a small enclosure at the breeder. When she was touched by a human, it was only to move her from one place to another. This poor little girl who is so beautiful and so fearful is going to need a lot of patience and love to get to trust us and to learn how to just be a dog.

We decided that we had to close her inside her kennel (no open dog door) so that our volunteer walkers could sit with her to begin to get her used to people. The first few days, she just trembled and would not look at me when I went into the kennel. I would sit on a little stool next to her and talk to her, stroking her softly. She mostly just trembled, but after a few days I could see that she was relaxing a bit more. She even began to take little glances at me. I know it sounds kind of silly but even these small things make my heart soar! One day, after about a week of visits, she followed me to the door as I walked out of the kennel. When I turned and closed it and then reached toward her to say goodbye, she actually lightly licked my hand! Wow!

The next week, we began to take her on short walks. She was very scared to be on a leash and tried to bolt at every noise. Going through the doors and gates was terrifying. As is typical of dogs who have never been on a leash, she would just run around me in circles trying to get away. Now, after a few weeks, she will walk mostly alongside me on a loose leash. I am waiting for the day that she begins to be interested in sniffing around as we walk. For now, she is still pretty worried about the world around her. When I sit down in a chair out in the yard, she will tentatively come up to me now. She loves to get petted and told how beautiful and good she is.

I started taking her into the office where there is usually something going on. This helps her to learn to relax inside. She still runs for one of the dog beds in the corner or goes underneath Francie's desk. But now she seems to like going in there whereas, at first, she was so scared. Lately I have been putting her on the couch next to me and brushing her. At first, she would not sit or lie down but now she immediately lies down and seems very relaxed, enjoying being brushed.

She spends a lot of time in the house with Mary and the other dogs, so she has gotten used to the sounds of a house: the TV, dishwasher and all the comings and goings. Mary has Tinkerbell sleep in her bedroom and some nights even on the bed!

She is still very fearful and shy but I am very proud of Tinkerbell. She has come so far even though many might not see it. As of this writing, we are looking at a foster opportunity for her with someone who has had experience with a former breeding dog. Tune in next quarter to find out how our little girl is doing. 💕



# Golden Angel: Wesley

by Jeannie Miller

Every once in a while, a dog comes into our care that makes us catch our breath. Take a look at big boy Wesley. He doesn't even look like a Golden, but we are pretty certain he is. What happened to this sweet boy with the biggest feet you've ever seen? Simply two things: the devastating effects of hypothyroid, and neglect by his former owners.

Wesley is 9 years old and was surrendered by his owners because they were downsizing to an apartment and felt they could not keep him. He had been with them since he was a puppy. Wesley grew to be a very big boy with a full, thick coat of red fur.

Some time ago when he was taken to the veterinarian for his annual vaccination, the vet declined to vaccinate him due to his poor health. The vet said they first had to find out what was wrong with this poor boy. They did blood work and determined that he had hypothyroid. The thyroid is a gland in the neck area that produces hormones that regulate many organs in the body. Low thyroid function can seriously affect these organs' normal function. A few of the common signs of hypothyroid include: lethargy and weight gain with no increase in appetite, dry eye, thinning coat on the body and tail, ear infections and pain, thickening of the skin in certain places (nose, elbows, etc.) and the accumulation of substances called mucopolysaccharides in facial muscles, causing them to droop. This last effect is called the "tragic look." Wesley had that in spades!

He was put onto a thyroid supplement by the vet. It was surely making him feel so much better, but then the owners decided it was too expensive and stopped giving it to him. Low thyroid takes a huge toll on the body and affects so many things, poor Wesley went spiraling down again.

And, as some owners do (which we strongly discourage), they elected to shave him. They mistakenly thought this would keep him cooler in the summer. And it probably also saved them from having to deal with brushing the thick coat of an outside dog. The result was that his topcoat (or guard coat) was damaged and the soft, fine undercoat overgrew it. It made Wesley look like a big, fuzzy teddy bear. And, in combination with the low thyroid, shaving made him more prone to skin irritations and did not keep him as cool in the summer or warm in the winter as his natural coat would.

So, this big, sweet boy was brought to GRRR and surrendered by the people who had him his whole life. And despite what he has been through, he is as sweet as they come.

We have to assume that his owners mostly kept him outside where he had to lie on hard surfaces, judging by the large calluses and open, bleeding sores on his elbows. He is overweight from lack of exercise and the thyroid condition. His nose had a large layer of dead skin crust on it, making it look like a bear's nose. His teeth were completely black, and Mary said when she went to look at his teeth for the first time, one of them was "waving at me!"

When Dr. Carpenter saw Wesley for the first time, he said, "this dog is a project." He needed to be neutered, get his skin sores healed, have his teeth attended to and see about what was causing his sore joints. But the first order of business was to get him back on thyroid medication. It only took a few days and Wesley was already starting to feel better and even trying to play with the other dogs. He follows Mary everywhere and if she comes back to the house even after just a few minutes, he gets so excited to see her that he dances in circles. The "tragic look" is disappearing fast! What a sweet, adorable boy he is!

The next step was dental work. Dr. Carpenter said it was one of the worst he has seen. The procedure took four and half hours. Several teeth were extracted, and the rest cleaned. You should see them now! Pearly whites!

Wesley still has a way to go to heal his body, but his spirit is strong and happy. He is being loved and pampered now. Thanks to your generous donations to our Angel Fund, we can take care of him and all other dogs who need us. 💙



## Please Donate to GRRR's Golden Angel Fund!

Many dogs coming to GRRR need extra medical attention, and sometimes extraordinary medical costs are the reason a Golden comes to us. With the Golden Angel Fund we can help more of them find a quality, pain-free life in a new and loving home. Your donation will help GRRR dogs in need of extra medical care including treatments for cancer, hip dysplasia, allergies, heartworm, infections, and special medications.

Please send your tax deductible donations to: GRRR, 15350 W. 72nd Avenue, Golden, CO 80007 (make your check payable to GRRR with "Golden Angel Fund" in the memo portion). Or donate on-line at <http://goldenrescue.com/golden-angel-fund/>

**Thank you!**



# Golden Angel updates

## Olive/Gilly by Nancy Grant



In the May 2020 Golden GRRRowl, Jeannie Miller wrote an excellent article about Olive, a rescue who required surgery for an entropion eye, a painful and complicated condition that can interfere with vision. Olive also had a urinary tract infection which was treated with antibiotics. Thanks to those of you who donate to the Golden Angel Fund, Olive is happy, healthy and pain-free.

When my precious Gainesville passed suddenly on January 15, I had no intention of adopting but was happy to foster. Mary asked if I could pick up Olive after surgery and care for her during recovery. (I later discovered that Mary told Roberta that I would be come a “foster failure.”) As always, Mary’s instincts were accurate! I adopted Olive and named my new baby Gilly after my mom, as that was Mom’s nickname since eighth grade. Mom lived in Houston but traveled with my sister to the Gala until last year when she was in hospice at home. She loved GRRR, and we asked people to donate to GRRR and another charity in lieu of flowers.

We don’t know much about Gilly, as she was a stray from another state. Then, what a transformation! Thanks to hot dogs and a leash, she now goes upstairs and down to the basement, and she LOVES to snuggle in bed with me. Her vocabulary includes car ride, sit, lie down, treat, outside, hungry, porch, deck, and more. She refuses to STAY as she wants to be with me every minute. Let’s just say I have NO privacy! She loves dog puzzles, listening to thunder with me on the back deck, watching the rabbits and squirrels on the front porch, and sitting ON me on the lawn chair. When we’re on the front deck, she wags her tail whenever kids, dogs, walkers, and the mailman go by, but it’s sad that we can’t interact with others right now. She can be sound asleep, but if I’m on the phone and end the call with “I love you,” she is joyful as she thinks I said it to her! Thank you again to everyone who donates to GRRR and the Golden Angel Fund! 💙



## Benson/Bridger by Marta Dubay

We renamed Benson during a nine-hour drive to Wyoming. We settled on Bridger, in memory of Jim Bridger, an old west mountain man.



Bridger is a dream. Last year we adopted Rocky/Rockie, another Golden Angel, through GRRR. Sadly, we only had him for 5 months. His leg was removed because of cancer. Heartbreakingly, it is also what cut his beautiful life so short. Our family has a saying that when one dog leaves us, it is because another dog needs a good home. Enter Bridger, a Golden Angel Turkey Dog. He had his own medical problems to overcome. I am so grateful to GRRR for giving him a chance when all information pointed to terminal hemangiosarcoma. Thankfully, the tumor on his spleen was benign and he is living the Colorado AND Wyoming dream!

He does have a bit of Istanbul street dog in him. Bridger can be giving us the lovey eye as we pet him and within seconds he will grab whatever is too close to the end of the dining room table and run off with it! The last time was a cheese plate! Guess I can’t blame him. At least he shared it with his bloodhound sister, Savannah! When he was living in Turkey, I’m pretty sure Bridger didn’t know where his next meal was coming from, so he takes advantage of that at times.

Bridger loves his daily walks, meals, treats and lying on the decks at our homes in Colorado and Wyoming. My hope is to erase everything bad that ever happened to him in Turkey. I hope his broken tail, broken toe and empty stomach are all but forgotten.

You can rest easy, dear Rockie. We found Bridger, the one I’m sure you were thinking of for us. We will always love you both. 💙



# President's Report

by Judi Servoss, GRRR President

Wow! What a few months we've been living through. The guidelines, the fear, and the uncertainty that have ruled our lives is beyond what any of us could have envisioned in our lifetimes. From day to day situations change. Numbers and statistics drive constantly changing optimism and pessimism.

So why do GRRR members have an advantage? We have our Golden Retrievers who love us unconditionally and provide solace in these difficult times. Most appreciate our constant presence and extra attention during our isolation—although I've heard a few dogs miss their alone time...

Meanwhile GRRR is alive and well, doing all that we can for the dogs who come to us, and raising as much money as possible given the economic uncertainties. Dogs are still coming in, and we're still placing them with great adopters.

It's fun to see how much creativity there is within this group. Who could have pictured an online Virtual Gala, complete with the adorable "Greeter" dogs who entertain at our usual live event? And knowing how hard people have been impacted financially, it's truly gratifying to see how many items were donated for the auction.

Thank you to all our staff, volunteers, members and donors for all your hard work. The GRRR community is truly special! 💙

# Phoebe's Place update

by Francie Rakiec, GRRR Executive Director

Whew! The 2020 gala is officially over for this year. What a whirlwind adventure it has been. We are truly thankful to everyone who participated in our online event. We could not continue to rescue and care for these wonderful Golden Retrievers without your continued support.

Going into this year's gala we had no idea what to expect. We had never done an online event like this before and we just weren't sure what would happen.

Despite all of that, we did have a record number of sponsorships. In years past we have had numerous small businesses step up, but this year we had a record number of individuals donating as well as a few small businesses participating. We hit a record amount of sponsorships with \$73,000. That alone brought us almost halfway to our goal of raising \$150,000 for this year's gala.

I am very happy to report that through our silent auction and our fund-a-need categories, we were able to raise \$105,645! That brings us to a grand total of \$178,645 for our 10th annual gala, which means we netted around \$171,000! That is a record-breaking number and truly unbelievable!

Again, from the bottom of our paws we would like to say thank you so much for your support!

GRRR people are the GRRReatest! 💙





# In Memory ♡♡

## Jackson by Kristen Stockland

Jackson was rescued from GRRR in September of 2014. I remember sitting with him in a field with a soccer ball, and he was such a happy-go-lucky pup. He sat on my lap in the field, and I knew he was the one. He was such a special pup throughout the almost six years I had him. He loved toys, his blankie, hiking, sticking his head in the fridge looking for a treat every time we opened it, car rides, sunbathing outside with his mama, playing tug-of-war with rope with dad, but most important, he loved life.

Jackson was such a loyal pup and was always at the front door to greet us every time we came in. He had a personality unlike any other dog, he loved to smile, follow his mama to every room in the house to make sure he always had an eye on me, dragged his security blanket to and from bed each day, and was the protector in our house. He was such a handsome boy who often got compliments on his beautiful fur coat.

In September 2019, Jackson was diagnosed with T-cell lymphoma. He had multiple enlarged lymph nodes and a mass on his spleen. We immediately started him on Prednisone, which gave him a wonderful extra 8 months with us. You wouldn't even know he had cancer. On May 9th, Jackson left us for doggy heaven with his blankie and favorite toy, "stingy," the sting ray by his side. We are absolutely heartbroken to lose our big boy. He was taken far too young at only 8 years old.

I'm extremely grateful GRRR gave me the chance to be Jackson's mama, share my life with him, and provide him with so many memories. ♡



## Gainesville by Nancy Grant

Gainesville LOVED our road trips! Hotel clerks remembered HIM and ignored ME! Since my family members lived in Houston, we stayed in Park City, Kansas and Gainesville, Texas. I renamed him in honor of my alma mater, University of Florida, but the Texas clerks claimed him as their own! In Oklahoma, Exit 203 has nothing but a gas station and HUGE fiberglass statues of a Golden and a bulldog. I had a hard time taking a picture of Gainesville because he felt VERY threatened by the Golden statue! It's the ONLY time I heard him growl from fear!

Gainesville didn't have a mean bone in his body. He would lie down in the backyard and squirrels would "test" him by being within six feet, and he would just observe them. He was popular at dog-friendly restaurants, and the neighborhood kids would hug him if we were on the front porch. He brightened up when the mailman was two blocks away as he knew he would get a hug and a treat.

I was in the process of completing the application for "Paws for Reading" at the Columbine Library, as he adored children. Everything changed on January 15. He went from doing his dog puzzles, cuddling with me, and chasing the toys I tossed, to suddenly being lethargic. Since it was after 8:30 pm, I was frantic and trying to find an emergency vet in my area. I finally found one, and I cannot remember driving there or back. I had to lift Gainesville into my car and two techs had to lift him out. He'd had a checkup in November and all was well. Sadly, he had a softball-sized tumor that burst but was undetectable due to its location.

I'm thankful for the vet who was very honest with me, and I'm thankful for the other staff members as the office was open 24/7, so I had all the time in the world to lie beside Gainesville on his dog bed, cry with him, share our memories and tell him how much I loved him. I'm thankful his passing was peaceful. I have his paw print, I delivered treats to the staff the next week, and I treasure our happy memories.

Thank you, GRRR, for bringing this precious pup into my life!  
Nancy Grant





# Donations in Memory or Honor 💕

Anonymous in memory of Jerry Bettenhaus

Anonymous in memory of Zach Skeff-Meyer

In Memory of Nancy Gardner:

Jerome Hicks • Rick Hohnstein  
John Laitinen/Ruth Vanderminde  
Colleen Lynch • Debra Winchell

In Memory of Meredith Sabin

(Mother of Roxanne Sabin):

Mitch & Pam Buckley  
Henning/ Swackhamer Families  
Rebecca and Crystal Kobza  
Allison Pearce • Sarah Young  
John & Dawn Wilson

Becky Brady in memory of Frank Brady

Suzanne Carter in honor of Romeo Carter

Margaret Crawford in memory of Fritz  
Zalaznik

Martha Davidson in memory of Brandy

Kurt & Amy DeLucero in honor of Riley,  
Gracie, Brittany, Archie

Albert & Marilyn Falcione in honor of Brent  
Flambures birthday

Ann Fuller in loving memory of James E.  
Watson, DVM

Kelli Gallagher in memory of Sunny  
Gallagher

Nancy Grant in memory of Keith Poplin

Nancy Grant in memory of Angela Tercek  
Schroeder, "my Mom who loved all of my  
GRRR dogs"

Joan Hackmann-Gaul in memory of William  
Hackmann

Tommy, Denise, Jordie & Brody Horton in  
memory of Rob Ford

Sarah and Kevin Kavanah in memory of  
Munson Kavanah

Sean Kennedy in memory of Jackie Kennedy

Mary Kenton in memory of Lilly

Barbara Kreisman in honor of Sundance

Angeline Kinnaird-Linn in memory of  
Dr. Alan Bortz

Janice Mann in honor of Lucas

Dan Matras in honor of Snoopy, Cajun,  
Simon, Bosley, Bear & Molly

Kate McLaughlin in honor of Kathy Dotson

Stacie McWilliams in memory of Palei

Tom & Kathie Metier in memory of Jerry  
Bettenhaus

Roberta Miller in memory of Lilly "a very  
precious girl – loved by so many at GRRR"

Linda Pierrel in honor of Sunny Springston

Linda Pierrel in honor of Buster, Pat & Scott  
Rogers' sister's dog

Ellen Rabinowitz in honor of Hope

Corinne Ryan in honor of Sherrie Stille

Sherri Sanders in memory of Andrea Sanders

Peggy Sciumbuto in memory of Sparky

Susan Sidwell in memory of Brianna

Brenda Steele in memory of Beatrice Steele

Margo Stewart in memory of Steve Stewart

Elaine Suiter in memory of Bailey

Megan Walsh in memory of Cotswold

Judy & Randy Whitcomb in honor of Jaxx

Priscilla Wilder in memory of Alex Rack

Donna Winship in memory of Carroll "Buck"  
Herring

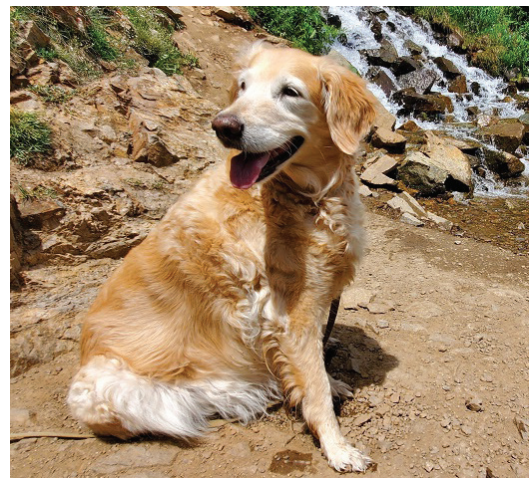
Richard & Wendy Wolf in memory of Mandy  
Wolf

Craig Wymer in honor of Dr. Michael Bauer

## Naming Tributes 💕

**Nika**, by Lolita and Tom Clouser

*"We called our puppy "Nika" after Nike, the Greek goddess of victory! She was a very beautiful, sweet and happy dog! Our doggie did quite a lot of hiking with us, and she loved swimming in those beautiful alpine lakes. She never missed a creek, either, and she would do a funny backward moonwalk dance trying to dig out crawfish from the bottom. When Nika was not on the go, she loved to spend time on the deck or in the back yard and watch the world go by. We miss her tremendously, and love for her will stay forever in our hearts!"*



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**Martin**, by Barbara Cox in honor of Mike Martin

*"Mike is a man of kindness and love for others and a huge fan of Goldens. He helped me and my family in countless ways, and I want to honor him through providing support for the Goldens you rescue. I think he would love it!"*

### Interested in a Naming Tribute?

With your donation of \$100 you may request a Naming Tribute so that one of GRRR's rescued Goldens will be named after your dog or loved one. You will honor the memory of your loved one, and your donation will help us give a rescued dog a new start to a better life. More info on Naming Tributes: <https://www.goldenrescue.com/naming-tribute/>





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