



"A Golden Retriever Can Change Your Life!"™

May 2024

GOLDEN GRRROWL

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

Spotlight on FAST!

by Laura Cunningham

Starting in 2018 & 2019, GRRR began to actively rescue former breeder dogs from commercial breeders (aka puppy mills). These poor animals arrive dirty, scared, malnourished, tails tucked, and with little to no light in their eyes... just heartbreaking.



It was difficult for VIP dog walkers to even access these neglected and abused puppy mill Goldens, as they tend to run to their outside kennel area and stay outside. It could take months of consistent, nearly daily visits to begin to build trust and finally see a tail wag and some spark come into the dogs' eyes.

Jeannie Miller, a GRRR Board member, was working with several of the dogs and mentoring a few VIP (dog walker) volunteers. We teamed up and created ways in which we could approach these shy and anxious dogs and began to engage with them. Jeannie formulated a plan to establish a team devoted to rehabbing the mill dogs. She brought the idea to the Board, the plan was approved, and the Fearful And Shy dog Team (FAST) was born. I was asked to organize it in mid- to late-2022. Now, every mill dog that comes to GRRR is in the FAST program.

The Kickoff

The FAST program officially kicked off in January 2023 with a team of 10 volunteers. These were mainly VIP volunteers who visited frequently and who often spent time sitting with these traumatized dogs.

An important point to make is that FAST volunteers are "dog trust-builders," not dog trainers. The first step in reaching these dogs is to show

them that humans can be good and can be trusted; that the humans will treat them kindly and respectfully. Therefore, the tenets upon which the FAST program is based are: Patience, Love, Understanding, Compassion, Calmness, Empathy, Perseverance, Collaboration, Communication, Consistent Visits, and Nonjudgment.

Essential VIP Walkers

Along with the FAST volunteers, VIP walkers are an essential part of the two-pronged FAST approach to rehabbing fearful and shy dogs (FAS):

1. VIP volunteers spend "in kennel" time with the FAS dogs, giving them lots of TLC and quiet time. This gives the FAS dogs the much-needed safe space to decompress, and it helps them become familiar, and at ease with, a variety of people. VIP-ers continue to build trust with the dogs throughout their time in the FAST program.
2. Once some level of trust and connection has been established by the volunteers, FAST members then begin to use gentle persistence and encouragement to widen the FAS dogs' comfort zone and practice skills that will help them transition to their forever homes. We use weekly assessments based on identified criteria to gauge their progress. These include: Do they wag their tail? Do they play and interact with other

Laura comforting Mable with Evelyn looking on



FAS dogs Maple following Evelyn

dogs? Do they stay in the kennel for visits? Do they leave the kennel and walk on leash? Do they walk through gates and doorways? Do they walk up and down stairs? These activities seem like they would be fairly basic and easy things to achieve; however, they can be terrifying for these dogs who have spent most of their lives in puppy mills, living in cages with very little time outside or positive human interaction.

FAST volunteers are very dedicated and spend many hours every week at GRRR. Some

go 3-5 days a week, two to three hours a day. The program is what the volunteers make of it, and it's up to them how much time they spend. We average 35 volunteers every week.

The volunteers are very creative and employ all sorts of methods to reach the often shut down, fearful and/or anxious dogs. What works for one dog may not work for another dog. Or, what worked one day might not work on the next day. FAST members also need to be fairly limber and agile: lots of crawling, sitting on kennel floors and on the gravel, and then, everyone's favorite, squeezing through doggie doors. Quite a few dogs have had to be carried out of their kennel so they have a chance to experience some freedom, sunshine, and the company of their fellow FAS dogs. Often, several members work together to achieve the safest, most strategic way to reach the dogs who are hiding in the outdoor kennel run, and in the most supportive atmosphere for the dogs.

Calming with Music—and Gentle Leading

An important piece to begin the rehab process is to create a quiet and safe environment for the dogs. Meditative music is played as a calming tool. We try to minimize the chaos of an active kennel by quieting or avoiding other loud, barking dogs. Sometimes this is achieved by shutting doggie doors to keep other dogs in the outside kennel, or by placing barriers to other parts of the kennel to keep the FAS dogs separated from the fray and maintain a more soothing environment.

Helping FAS dogs become comfortable leaving the safety of their kennel can be challenging, and is made more difficult by the fact that FAS dogs are generally not treat-motivated, especially initially. Occasionally a FAS dog is

motivated by toys, especially “stuffies,” which can be used to help lure them out of their kennels. An effective method we use to entice them out of their kennel is to place an extra-long lead on them and open their gate (while we wait outside) until they summon enough courage to walk out on their own, at their own pace. Tugging hard on or dragging them by their leash is to be avoided, as it can further traumatize FAS dogs. Former breeder dogs generally feel more comfortable with other dogs than with humans, so we often like to use one of the braver FAS dogs, or a suitable compatible dog not in the program, to act as a “leader.” The role model dog shows the more frightened dog the way, which is less stressful for the FAS dog, as you can see in the photo of Maple and Evelyn.

Once the FAS dogs are willing to leave their kennels, we often take them out through the back gates, as this route seems less scary for them. The smaller, fenced-in Meet and Greet area is a great starting place for them to explore. For dogs who are really skittish, we again use an extra-long lead to aid in recall, and to catch them more easily if they keep running away. If there are a few FAST members present, we try to get multiple FAS dogs out to the Meet and Greet together. This is where we might see the first tail wag or play bow, and it is so exciting, heartwarming and gratifying to see them share a bit of playfulness and joy!

Stairs seem to be another big hurdle for our FAS dogs. It is not uncommon for us to sit at the top of the stairs with our FAS dog for 15 to 30 minutes, only to realize that today is not going to be the day they take that first step. We patiently try this for however many times or days it takes, until that magical moment when they do overcome their fear and uncertainty and take that first step. It is a time for celebration indeed, with each and every step they take and each milestone they achieve!

There's an App for That

Communication is a top priority for FAST members. We have an App called Twist that allows the team to keep tabs on each dog's day-to-day progress. We share with each other what is (or is not) working, and that allows one member to pick up where the last member left off. We can have up to eight dogs in the program at once, so this clear, dog-specific communication is of vital importance to the program. We also meet as a group, in person, multiple times a year, and have an in-person meeting generally two weeks after receiving a new group of FAS dogs from a puppy mill. We review and update our policies and procedures, bounce ideas off of one another, share milestones, insights, laughs, and sometimes tears. We have a well-oiled team and work well with each other, and that helps us to better help our sweet FAS dogs. Prior to this new program, these traumatized mill dogs were at GRRR an average of 3-6 months before they were well enough to be adopted. Now they spend 2 weeks on average, in the program, and can either be directly adopted from FAST, or moved to VIP status to await their adoption.

And Now...Here's Lizzie

Lizzie I'll never forget the night 6 month-old Lizzie and her sister Skye, and mill mamas Mia and Zayley arrived at GRRR last August. They were all so scared they huddled together in the corner of the Meet & Greet area, common for mill dogs. What caught my attention was little Lizzie's big, scared eyes that followed my every move. This was uncommon, because most rescued mill dogs avert their gaze in any way that they can. I thought since they were only 6 months old they didn't experience the deplorable conditions of the puppy mill for too long, and hopefully they wouldn't be too traumatized and would come around quickly. I was wrong.

The next day, I went into the kennel that Lizzie shared with Skye. Skye scampered to the outside portion of their kennel, though Lizzie remained in the corner, trying to make herself as small as possible. Again, it struck me how Lizzie's big, frightened eyes bore into me. It was heartbreaking. I was witnessing abject terror. I just didn't expect this depth of fear in such a young, little punkin.' FAST members, as well as VIPers, sat in the kennel with both girls for days, trying to establish some connection and level of trust. Skye started approaching us a little more... her curiosity overcoming her reluctance. Lizzie remained frozen with her petrified, intense stare, but allowed FAST members to approach her, pick her up, and carry her out to the Meet & Greet area, where she joined her sibling and the other two mill girls. Lizzie hugged the fence and clambered to get behind her braver sister, though did she start walking on leash a bit more. Baby steps!

FAST members continued to pick up and carry the sisters out of their kennel for weeks. One FAST member came nearly every day and spent hours with Lizzie. They developed a very special bond, which was an important step in Lizzie's rehabilitation. Slowly, Lizzie began to build trust with humans and her expression transformed from saucer-sized eyes, filled with terror and uncertainty, to a more relaxed and peaceful appearance.

Lizzie remained in the FAST program until she met her new dad, Pete Friesema, and furry family on November 10, 2023. Much to my amazement, Lizzie warmed up to Pete rather quickly, in her own shy way. Pete has reported that Lizzie is doing very well. She loves her siblings, follows their lead, and has become quite the swimmer! Five months after she went home, she still will not approach Pete if he looks directly at her. He has discovered that he needs to approach her from the side, without looking directly at her. Adopting a former mill dog is a very unique experience. The key ingredients are patience, love, and understanding, and adapting to the dog's needs and at their pace.

One thing for sure, our Little Lizzie knows love, joy and has an incredibly safe...and FUN home. And that is what FAST is all about.

FAST by the Numbers

The pilot program, launched in 2023, was six months long and consisted of 10 team members. Then the program was expanded to the current team of 19 active members: 17 VIP volunteers and our two wonderful kennel techs, Grace and Zoe. In 2023, the program received and rehabbed 47 FAS dogs, all of whom have been adopted. The average length of stay in the FAST program (until moving to VIP or being adopted) was two weeks, with a range of days to three months.

In addition to hands-on interaction with the FAS dogs, the FAST program plays a part in other areas at GRRR. For instance, FAST sends a weekly progress report to the Director, Director of Animal Care, Adoption Coordinator, and Board member (Francie Rakiec, Mary Kenton, Roberta Miller, and Jeannie Miller) to keep them updated on each FAS dog's progress, including when they may be ready for meet and greets.

FAST members do follow-up calls to FAS dog adopters two weeks after they are adopted, and again about five to six months after that to check in and to lend support in any way we can. We started a Facebook group for owners of FAS dogs to support each other and share their experiences, tips, and triumphs.

FAST members also oversee the new Shy Dog Area during GRRR parties, an area that we now call "Bob" (thanks to a grant from Robert B. Sturm). Having this separate area gives the families of shy dogs an opportunity to bring their dog to a less hectic area, and give the dogs and families an opportunity to connect with each other.

FAST is gaining experience rehabbing these sweet, brave, and unbelievably forgiving dogs. It is not always a linear process, though with Love, Patience, Compassion and Teamwork, we have witnessed amazing transformations. It is such a joy to see that spark begin to shine in their eyes and to know that trust-building has begun to take root. What an honor it is to be a part of their journey, and to see them go off to their forever homes! FAST has been a successful and rewarding experience for the FAST members and, hopefully for the dogs and VIP walkers, too.



A happy Lizzie



Mark Vallejos and buddy

a regular basis, they begin to trust. They come out of their shell, stop being so timid, and become desirable to adopters. It is so rewarding to see a change in their personalities. Spending time with these Golden Retrievers, taking them for walks or sitting with them and giving them love, their personalities come out and they start to shine. Amazing to see!

Working with the FAST dogs has personally allowed me to create special bonds, which helps me with my emotional health and always brings me joy. I have also made some new and amazing friends through GRRR.



Susan Fosmire and friends



Simone Shormann with Lizzie (sitting) and her sisters

Words from the Team

Mark Vallejos: Working in the FAST program, or as I call it, “the labor of love program” at GRRR makes me feel like I’m doing the right thing. I’m contributing to a solution so these beautiful animals can be adoptable. In working with these Golden Retrievers on

Susan Fosmire: I want to thank Jeannie Miller for starting this program and Laura Cunningham for leading it and teaching the team. When I started volunteering at GRRR, I had no idea they took in mill dogs who needed so much care. To meet these dogs, it can break your heart. But I soon learned that this FAST team jumps right in to show these dogs that humans can be trusted, and will love them and care for them. And the dogs – it is so amazing to see how brave and resilient they are. The transformation I’ve seen after weeks of working with them astonishes me. My heart is filled with so much joy to see them become happy, playful dogs for the first time in their lives.

Simone Shormann: A dog’s ability to forgive their horrible treatment in the past and move

forward every day, building trust in humans and situations, is astounding. I love seeing all the FAST dog breakthroughs like a simple tail wag, walking through a gate or door, or walking over a bridge to WOOF. To be a part of the incredible FAST team and all the passionate and dedicated members is so amazing. To be able to work together and help these deserving pups grow and become ready for their “forever” homes is humbling.

Cherie Chao: I’ve been a volunteer at GRRR for a few years and became a part of the FAST team when it was formed. Being involved with these dogs really opened my eyes to the awful treatment so many received. Besides the lack of physical care, these dogs have severe social and emotional issues as well. Regaining their trust and watching them blossom into real dogs that wag their tails, chase balls, and show their love is amazing! Our FAST team



Ken, Cherie and Brodie

is an incredible group of men and women who love these dogs unconditionally! It’s been a real honor to be a part of this group and watch them in action. Their patience, commitment, devotion and love for these Golden Retrievers is contagious. It’s so satisfying to see these dogs progress and find their forever homes. Before volunteering at GRRR, I had not considered adopting an older dog. In July, we adopted a mill dog who had lived in a kennel for over 7 years. It took a couple weeks before he was housebroken and a few more before we saw his tail wag. Brodie is now a very happy, extremely sweet Golden! We adore him! It’s never too late to have a happy life!

Laura Cunningham: Being involved with FAST has been life changing for me! My newfound passion is being part of this team that rehabs shy, neglected, and traumatized dogs. How lucky am I?! I am astounded by the level of dedication and compassion team members display each and every day. I am equally astounded by the courage our FAST dogs exhibit, when they start to let their walls down and let us get closer to them...they are my heroes. It is so gratifying and humbling to witness their progress. GRRR has been so supportive and appreciative of our efforts – thanks to Mary, Francie, Roberta, Dee, Jeannie and the GRRR board, and all the transporters who bring the dogs to GRRR. And a HUGE “Thank-you” to my fellow FAST teammates – all y’all are incredible and I am so grateful for you all!

I will wrap this up with a quote from my daily calendar, which sums up how I feel about the FAST program and the beautiful dogs we get to help:

“Let the beauty of what you love be what you do.”

Recent Rescues

Hi GRRR:

We were privileged to add a GRRR Golden to our family on February 24. After being recovered from a breeder in Nebraska, 8-month old Finnigan (formerly known as Kenai) is a sweet addition to our family. He loves snuggling and is bonding with our other dogs and cat nicely.

This is the second Golden we've adopted through GRRR, and we're incredibly grateful for this wonderful pet rescue.

Sheila Deane



Dear GRRR:

March 17 is Lucy's 1-Year Gotcha Day! It's been quite a year and she's come far. Lucy attended obedience training in order to learn to tame some of her teenage tendencies and become a better citizen. Of course, balls, balls and balls are her favorite along with her stuffed pig. Lucy can be quite sassy, barking when a toy is out of reach or when she wants the ball thrown. She grunts and groans in her sleep, which is quite amusing. She has overcome her fear of the wooden bridge on the Ralston Creek Trail. With four light-colored Golden Retrievers in our cul de sac, she enjoys playing with the other "blondes," her flat-coat niece, and protecting us from squirrels, rabbits, foxes, UPS, FedEx, and Amazon deliveries. She gently tries to play with her 15-year-old cairn terrier brother, but only succeeds occasionally. Thank you GRRR!

Donna and Larry Linnet

Dear GRRR:

Formally known as Remi when we adopted her, Breeze has made major strides from fear to confidence...one day at a time. She loves our other dog, Joey, who she loves chasing, running zoomies, and taking daily walks with.

She is a sweet little girl and her nickname is Breezy Boop. She boops (pokes me with her nose) for a treat after dinner.

Loud noises still scare her but we're helping her with that. She comes upstairs to sleep with the rest of her pack now (she slept in the corner of our family room for the first 10 months).

We are so blessed to have her.

Thank you,

Lani Beach and Greg Johnson



Recent Rescues



Hi GRRR:

Nugget is doing great! He has settled into his new home and loves his new family. He especially loves his 11-year-old Golden Retriever sister (Logan) and tries so hard to play with her, even though she's not much into playing in her older years. Nugget also loves his new Kitty sister Parker, and is quite fascinated with her!

Nugget also loves playing with his ball, and drops it at his human's feet nonstop in hopes that someone will kick it for him to chase. He loves other dogs and has a lot of new friends to play with. He has been such a blessing to our family, and really helped us all get through the loss of our last Golden a little easier. Nugget is a perfect addition to our family, and we are so grateful that we found him (and he found us).

Cindy Dalton



Hi GRRR:

When I adopted Jack (formerly Pasha), I knew he was an epileptic, and that has been fairly easy to manage. His seizures got more frequent, so I have him in the care of a neurologist and have added another medication which really appears to be helping.

When I got Jack, he was very reactive towards people and dogs alike. I've done a lot of work with him, including a trainer who is worth the expense! Jack's not perfect but has settled down quite a bit and is trusting much more.

Jennifer Bienzle

Hi GRRR!

Lulu was the perfect addition to our family. My other two Goldens (one from GRRR) love her. She is the star of the neighborhood and is always ready to say hi to everyone. I can't imagine not having her in our pack.

She is the best! I can never thank GRRR enough for giving me Daisy and Lulu.

Best,

Jenn Gehring



Hi GRRR:

Scout became a member of our family on January 21, 2024. GRRR was kind enough to notify us of a 5-month-old female Golden puppy they had just rescued from a shelter. So up to Arvada we went with our 12-year-old Golden boy, Kodi, and home we came a few hours later with Scout.

Scout has definitely made herself at home. Her favorite activities include retrieving tennis balls, de-stuffing toys, and doing “zoomies” in the back yard. She’s a natural at riding in the car and loves to go for walks at Palmer Park and Garden of the Gods. She has two puppy cousins and several puppy playmates she gets to visit with several times a week. Life is good, according to her!

She’s definitely become a part of our lives and hearts!

Thank you, GRRR,

Libby and Rick Greene



Hi GRRR:

We adopted Brodie on July 31, 2023. He is the perfect dog for us. So sweet! We are so grateful we were able to adopt him. I truly enjoy volunteering with GRRR as well.

Brodie was a stud from a puppy mill and must have lived in a kennel for 7+ years. I met him as a volunteer dog walker and fell in love! He was not housebroken or familiar with floor surfaces. He would not walk on the deck or go up or down the two stairs. He knew no common commands - sit, stay, come. So we essentially got a huge puppy! But what a sweetie!

We have a fenced acre with two pickleball courts, so have friends and their dogs coming over frequently. But Brodie also enjoys when they leave so he gets us all to himself. He loves walks and is known in the neighborhood as the dog who walks with his stuffy. He knows some commands and now enjoys the deck. He still is fearful first thing in the morning when getting on the wood floor, and it takes him a few minutes to get comfortable. This is our first adoption of an older dog and we would do it again!

Cherie Chao



Hello GRRR!

We love our Maple! We adopted our sweet Maple on June 4, 2023 and she was a year old April 7. We absolutely love her! We couldn’t imagine life without her! She loves to do zoomies in the back yard and does her stomps when she is happy. She loves to play fetch and go for walks, stopping to visit all of her dog friends. She’s a social butterfly and a big ball of love!

We love her so much!

Misty Daniels



Recent Rescues

Dear GRRR:

Duke and Stella have settled into their new home. They love playing outside and taking walks, and their favorite spot in the house is looking out the bay window! They have been a blessing to our family.

James and Jean White



Stella & Duke

Dear GRRR:

Maddie has been with us for almost a year and is a happy, healthy, playful girl who loves going on daily walks and to the dog park twice a day. Recently she has begun chasing a ball and initiating play with other dogs, and no longer displays the fearful escaping/flight behavior. She absolutely loves running, bouncing, and lying in the snow. She is strongly bonded with me and generally follows me everywhere. She sleeps with me every night. Seeing her cute face every morning fills me with joy.

We love what you and the staff are able to accomplish in making the lives of Golden Retrievers better; in fact, we have met several dogs at our local dog park in Castle Rock who were cared for by GRRR.

Blessings,

Dwight Podgurski



Maddie

Hi GRRR

It's hard to believe we have had Fang for almost 1 year; seems like we have had him forever. He is a funny guy and a typical Newfie. His favorite past time is lying around and sleeping, but he does enjoy walks and car rides and tries to play with anyone who will let him. I think his size intimidates his furry siblings, Jackson and Ivy.

Fang finally enjoys being brushed and doesn't mouth me like he used to, but still grabs my arm and pulls me to the door as soon as I get home. Seems like "pulling people to safety" is definitely ingrained in him.

Fang had to undergo an eye lift because he had too much eyelid skin, preventing him from seeing. The surgery has definitely helped his sight (although his eyes look a little scary), but he still has too much forehead skin (he needs a doggy face lift), so when he has his head down he can't see very well. Despite his somewhat impaired vision, he is a very healthy and happy dog. We are so thankful he became a part of our family.

Francie Rakiec and Wade Stencil



Fang & Jackson

Hi GRRR

Skye is doing great, full of energy and being a pup. We like to take her for a half- or full-day puppy day care once a week to be with other dogs, and of course the dog park when the weather is good. Our son's Golden comes over (at about 80 pounds male) and they do play a lot. Our other golden is 12 years old and just puts up with Skye.

Jim and Kathy Edwards



Dear GRRR:

We adopted Junie B (formerly Scarlet) on April 29, 2023. She is a blast – confident, funny, affectionate, stubborn. This is our first Golden, and wow – now we get it. Such a lover! Who needs a weighted blanket?! Who needs a spouse? Who needs anything other than a dog cuddling up on the sofa with you and farting and hogging your bed? I sure don't.

Perhaps most important, she and our other rescue, Oso, are the best of buds. They are always together – always touching – and Junie has really brought him out of his shell. They play wild and crazy together all day long. Junie is hilarious and very independent. She was living on the streets, but you would never know how her young life started – she is as peaceful as can be. She's happy, healthy, and very svelte.

We are so thankful to GRRR and of course our dear friend, Jan Whitt, who was the one who helped us to get this incredible dog.

Junie is everything we could have wanted in a second dog – and much more. Thank you for the work you do and for giving us the privilege of raising this lovely dog – she has made our little family complete!

Best, Annik and Bian Stahl

Dear GRRR:

We adopted our Golden girl, Sage, on St Patrick's day of 2023. She was rescued from a breeder. Not knowing if she was housebroken or how she would do at home alone, I put her in a crate. She let us know immediately she was not having that. She shredded anything within the reach of her paws or teeth. Of course, we immediately fell in love with her.

Sage is the sweetest, most gentle petite girl. She loves to walk, to eat and to sleep. She absolutely blossoms when she is with her furry friends for play dates. She wrestles, runs, plays with toys, chews on bones and is a typical playful Golden. There might be a sister or brother from GRRR in her future.

Jan Blue



Recent Rescues



Blue

Hello GRRR:

Blue (formerly Sully, adopted 9/2/23) is doing great. He has come out of his shell so much and increased his confidence immensely.

Blue has begun to constantly play with his brother, Happy. They have been running around through the snow, and Blue has discovered the fun that toys will bring. He has also gained an appreciation for close cuddles and being held. Blue has found his home and increased confidence has shown he knows it. Yes!

In the first few months he was timid, especially around my dad. He would run to 'his corner' on the couch when my dad would walk in, and rarely move in his presence. Now, he will walk around and accept pets, and even sleep in his arms. It was apparent he may have had negative experiences with males in the past as he was less timid around my mom, grandmother, and sisters. He exhibits excitement when we get home, which I was not sure we would see for awhile.

Grace Higgins

Hi Debbie!

Our Miss Roxy is doing great! She's still pretty skittish around Derf, but she seems fine with me. We're still in negotiations about the use of the dog door.

Roxy has really come around from that scared pup with her head down and tail between her legs! We hope she's so happy to be in her forever home! Here is a photo of Roxy and Cooper relaxing.

Thanks for keeping us in the loop with GRRR news!

Jay Bergman



Cooper & Roxy

Dear GRRR:

Birdie is doing wonderful! She's a happy, healthy, almost one-year-old beautiful girl!

Here is my recent favorite photo of her for your newsletter!

Thank you GRRR!

Caroline Sparks



Birdie



Tucker & Max

Hi GRRR:

We were looking to adopt a new friend for our 4-year-old Golden Retriever, Tucker, when we heard about Max in July 2023. We went to GRRR to meet him and took him home the same day.

Max fit in immediately with our family. He quickly adopted Tucker's morning nap schedule, and reminded Tucker when play time is...which is basically whenever Max wanted to play. There's lots of wrestling, biting, napping together, and general slobbering on each other every day. One of his favorite things to do is get a toy in his mouth and then jam it into Tucker's face to get him to play. Max is a world-class snuggler (and snorer) at bedtime, and will demand pets from anyone willing to give them. We feel lucky and grateful to have found this loving goofball!

GRRR was so amazing through the adoption process and made it all super easy. Thank you to everyone who takes care of these sweet loving dogs and helps them find new homes!

Best,

Steve Levin

Hi GRRR

Mack's 1-year gotcha anniversary is on April 1. In his first year with us, he has cured our broken hearts from a previous dog loss, and cured our other dogs' broken heart too. He loves to swim, chase tennis balls, snuggle with his sister, and play with his toys. He just learned to chase squirrels so he's always on a lookout. He's the sweetest, cutest, and most handsome dog, and has brought so much joy to our family. Thank you!

Haley Clark



Mack

Dear GRRR:

Here is our boy Radi - he's been doing great, all settled into life in Arvada! He is having a great time with his furry brother, Tanner, and loves to wrestle in the yard with him. We call him "Swiper" because he likes to take things and go on his bed and hide out. Radi is very quiet dog and doesn't bark very often but does love to run the fence and tease the six dogs that live on all three sides of us.

He has been a very fun and active addition to our family.

Kathleen Radi



Radi

Recent Rescues

Hi GRRR:

We adopted Bruce last June. He has been such an amazing addition to our family. He has definitely grown a lot but still is all puppy. Bruce has had a lot of adventures with his sister Josie and us. He is an absolute cuddle bug and we love him so much.

Cheers

Simone Shormann



Good morning, GRRR:

Wanted to share a picture of Casey & Mollie (formerly Jace & Katie). They are really good dogs – and are very, very loved.

I was wondering if their records indicate us if Casey's "father" was definitely a Golden or if he was possibly a Pyrenees? Lol. Our groomer suggests the latter and Casey has grown like a weed the past 3 months. I want to make sure we're feeding him accordingly to his "breed".

I hope you have a good day and a wonderful week.

Cindy Arndt

Hi GRRR:

We adopted Dublin (Goldendoodle) in Feb 2019 as a puppy. His pregnant mom was rescued from a puppy mill. We called him Big Boy as a puppy and he still is – my 100-pound lap dog! He is goofy, a cuddler, and such a good boy!

We adopted his brother, Gideon, from GRRR last summer, about age 2 at the time. We've never had two dogs before but felt that Dublin needed a buddy. Gideon has been such an amazing addition to our family. He's a little guy and it took him a while to gain weight and clear up a skin issue he had, but we've corrected the counter-surfing and digging and he couldn't be more amazing! He is so quiet and sweet and we love having him! The boys love to play, run, go for long walks, and visit with the neighborhood dogs. Thanks to GRRR for the gift of these two boys!

Kelly Curry



Dear GRRR:

Murphy was adopted from GRRR at around 8 weeks old when he was just a little chicken nugget. He has since found he really enjoys hikes, car rides, cuddles with his parents, and toys that make a lot of noise. His favorite treats include peanut butter, carrots, blueberries, and yogurt. Murphy is also known to indulge in the occasional pup cup, which also brings him a lot of joy. His parents are his favorite people in the world, although he's also fond of his aunts and uncles.

Murphy is a really happy boy who is quite spoiled. In his first year, he has been to Wisconsin and Illinois to visit his grandparents, and has been camping with his parents a couple of times. He's a big fan of snuggling up in the tent with them. He has a few friends, his best one being Gauge, an 8 year old yellow lab who's dad is good friends with Murphy's mom. They really like to play together and try to occupy the same couch cushion. Adopting Murphy was the best decision and we love him so much! We can't wait to one day get him a fur sibling!

He is wonderful and has made our life 1000x better. Thanks!

Andrew Hickey



Hello GRRR!

Just sending a pup-date on Marla. She'll be one this weekend and we took her home from GRRR early June of last year. She has been so much fun for our family and has fit in beautifully with our other pets. We all love her so much.

We named her Marla, after Marla Hooch from the movie, A League Of Their Own (we are a baseball family), and affectionately refer to her as Marla Pooch.

The Morton Family

Dear GRRR:

Sweet Ashton came home with us last Christmas with the help of Mary Kenton. We thought that we would take a break after losing our dear Oliver, but, as usually happens, plans change.

Ashton is recovering now from hip replacement surgery which was done several weeks ago. He is a stellar dog, or should I say puppy, as he is under 2 years old. He is from the same breeder that our Ellie came from a few years ago. Ellie has been flourishing as a therapy dog at the hospital and library for a few years. We feel lucky to have this beautiful Ashton, and are so excited to see him run and play in the weeks to come. Possibly he will be a therapy dog in the future.

Thanks again to Mary and Francie.

Pat and Scott Rogers



President's Report

by Judi Sevoss, President



I recently took a trip down memory lane while doing some research for a grant application. I looked through some of GRRR's old newsletters, smiling at dogs I remember, and getting teary-eyed over some who have passed. My own dogs, and many of yours, are part of our past and our present. So many have passed through our doors, going back to 1996.

A potential donor asked me to send some information on GRRR, and he was overwhelmed just by looking at our newsletter, annual report, and website. I'm so proud of GRRR and all that we do. Sometimes we forget and take it for granted, but the very hard work that goes into our success should not be overlooked. I'm mentally pointing at Mary Kenton and Francie Rakiec, but all of our staff and volunteers are an important part of that as well.

I hope to see many of you at our Annual Spring Fling—May 19th—so be sure it's on your calendar! 💙

14th Annual Gala: Go for the Gold!

by Francie Rakiec, Executive Director

This year we will be Going for the Gold at the 2024 Gala. Our event will be held on Saturday, June 22, at a new venue called Social Capitol, located in Arvada. We are very excited to try out this venue and are looking forward to ample, kiosk-free parking as well as a much larger indoor space for us to spread out.

We will be having a cocktail hour beginning at 5:30 pm. During this time you can chat with your friends and peruse the wonderful silent auction items. We will also be having a plated dinner and our program will feature guest speaker, GRRR board member and co-founder of the FAST program, Jeannie Miller. She will be discussing the ins and outs of the FAST program as well as what inspired her to start FAST.

We are always searching for sponsors (business or individuals) for this event as well as any unique auction items. For more information please visit our website at

<https://www.goldenrescue.com/event/annual-grrr-gala/> 💙

We are sniffing for silent auction donations for our annual GALA.

gift baskets • gift cards • art • dog stuff



Newsletter Submissions

We all love reading about your Golden and we'd like to hear from you! If you'd like to submit a letter AND photo of your GRRR rescue, email the letter and digital photo to debbie.davis@goldenrescue.com. Deadline for the August 2024 issue is July 6, 2024. Thanks!

GRRR Stats

January 1 - March 31, 2023

Number of Dogs Placed: 91

\$ Spent on Medical Needs: \$36,450

Volunteer Spotlights

Pefe & Nancy Lynch

Nancy and I have been married for 41 years. Much of that time was spent pursuing our careers, Nancy as an RN and myself as a pilot for Eastern Airlines and United Airlines. Over the years we have made 13 Golden Retrievers and Labs beloved members of our family, some of whom arrived while I was away on a trip. Surprise!

Nancy, my bride of 41 years, was working at Lutheran Medical Center almost 24 years ago where she met a GRRR volunteer named Ann, who was rounding up with her comfort Golden. Ann mentioned that a sweet female owner-surrender had arrived that day. I was away and plans were made for Nancy to meet her the next day. Nancy loaded up our two dogs and came home with three! Surprise! We started volunteering shortly after that for GRRR and other Golden and Lab rescues in various capacities. I first began visiting, walking and grooming dogs at Sage Valley. But our first love and passion has been transporting both long and short distances, many times coming back with multiple dogs. This has included trips to Grand Junction, New Mexico, Nebraska, Wyoming and points in between. We also really enjoy the opportunity to go to front range airports for rescues being flown in by volunteer pilots. This allows us to get both an airplane/airport – and rescue dog – fix!

After the acquisition of Phoebe's Place, Steve Morganfield and I went to work clearing the grounds with our heavy duty weed whackers –no easy task! I also participated in a number of GRRR events with our dogs Tucker and Bode as ambassador dogs. My

latest volunteering pleasure at GRRR is a more odiferous one. I enjoy seeing everyone at the various events at

Phoebe's Place, so I volunteer to be a Pooper Scooper! For me, it's an enjoyable time and just an extension of my at-home duties! I also phone the GRRR food order to Chow Down in Evergreen. When it arrives, I bring it to Phoebe's place. Nancy also sends vet records to people adopting from Retriever Rescue of Colorado.

We love hanging out with our two dogs, Gracie, a former breeder from Golden Retriever Freedom Rescue and emergency transport "failure," and Brady, a very lucky dog who was paired with a female Golden in a New Mexico shelter because he was so scared. The Golden was coming to GRRR, and Mary agreed to take Brady too. We brought them in on a transport, and decided that he needed to join our family. This Heinz 57 mixed breed who, according to DNA, has a little Golden and Lab in him, is our much loved and lucky transport tag-along. Thank you, Mary!

It's a joy to see all these years later, the incredible organization GRRR has become. We are so proud to be longtime members, supporters, and a part of the group of incredible volunteers. GRRR has and will continue to be a big part of our lives. 💙



Cathy & Russ Jones

We have been Golden lovers for more than 45 years! Golden Retriever puppy Molly joined our family in October 1978. Since that happy day we have had 10 beloved Golden Retrievers – sometimes one dog at a time, sometimes two at a time, and even 3 at a time!! All have been "the best" dog. The last five have been wonderful GRRR dogs! Keeper is in our family now . . . and he is "the best."

We adopted our first GRRR Golden, Brock, in 2008 and soon after volunteered as walkers/socializers of the GRRR dogs then staying at Sage Valley Kennels, awaiting their forever homes. We continued to enjoy this activity with the Golden Retrievers for many years, as the program developed into the current VIP walking program.

We both were a part of the initial Gala planning committee for GRRR's very first Gala at the Cherokee Castle in Sedalia in 2011. What an epic undertaking that was for GRRR! The annual Gala has evolved into GRRR's super fundraiser every year.

In 2011, a monumental donation by Mitchell Graye and Pam Hollister allowed GRRR to purchase Phoebe's Place. Russ was a part of GRRR's Capital Campaign Committee that found the property. As an attorney, he was involved in the many legal concerns leading up to the purchase, and he also helped handle the closing. Once GRRR became a property owner, ongoing legal issues have always needed his attention.

Since 2013 Russ has been the volunteer legal advisor to GRRR. He works closely with the Board of Directors and with Francie, GRRR's Executive Director. His involvement includes research, resolution

and advice on legal and insurance matters.

In 2017 Cathy began to develop an adoption follow-up program to check in with GRRR's adopters and to encourage them to stay connected to GRRR. Questions are answered and encouragement is offered – all for the love of the Golden Retrievers. More recently, Cathy is involved with spay/neuter follow-up, assuring compliance with Colorado law regarding sterilization.

We love being a part of GRRR! Fun member events are also occasions to play with the dogs and to visit with many of our dear GRRR friends. Indeed, our lives have been enriched by the dogs we have loved and the associations we have enjoyed. Rescue dogs are "the best", and GRRR rescue dogs are "the very best"! Thank you, GRRR, for being an exemplary organization that has always made us proud . . . and warmed our hearts . . . as members and volunteers. 💙



Go for the Gold Gala! Saturday, June 22, 2024

5:30 – 10:00 pm

NEW LOCATION!

Social Capitol
6543 Wadsworth Blvd
Arvada, CO 80003



Open Bar • Great Appetizers
Seated Dinner • Ambassador Dogs
Silent Auction • Live Auction

Attire: Cocktail/Business Casual

RSVP by June 8, 2024

For more information and tickets,
please visit www.goldenrescue.com



GRRR 2025 Calendar Photo Contest

The Golden Retriever Rescue of the Rockies' 19th Annual Photo Contest is now open! Your Golden could be featured in a full page photo in the 2025 calendar! The Grand Prize Winner will also have their photo on the cover. Last year's calendar was another big success—we received over 500 entries!

Submission Guidelines:

- \$5 per photo entry fee. No limit to number of photos you can submit! 12 Monthly and 12 Honorable Mention winners all receive a free calendar.
- Golden Retrievers, mixes, or Goldendoodles only; doesn't have to be a GRRR or Rescue dog.
- **Horizontal shots** only, not vertical... that means more wide than tall! →
- You can submit the same photos as in previous years. Monthly and Honorable Mention winning photos excluded.
- Set your camera at the HIGHEST resolution (photos will be enlarged to 8.5"x11"). Please don't make the files smaller, send the original, largest file.
- The photo must have been taken by you or someone in your family; you can't submit photos taken by someone else.

SENDING PHOTOS:

- email contest@goldenrescue.com
 - or via WeTransfer: <https://wetransfer.com> (free and very easy) to contest@goldenrescue.com
 - or Text to 720-254-3124. Include your name and dog's name. Send original size.
- IMPORTANT: You will receive an e-mail confirmation within 48 hours; if you don't receive confirmation, assume files didn't go through and re-send.

SENDING ENTRY FORM

- Fill out the interactive PDF. **MAKE SURE THE FILE IS OPEN IN ADOBE ACROBAT** (not just your web browser)! Fill out, hit the Submit button, and it will email to contest@goldenrescue.com.
- Or scan/take a pic and email contest@goldenrescue.com or text 720-254-3124
- Or print out and snail mail to address below

SENDING PAYMENT

- Pay online at www.goldenrescue.com (\$5 per entry)
- Or mail check to:
GRRR Photo Contest
Attn: Jeanie Peebles
8095 Holland Ct, Unit D
Arvada, CO 80005
Please make checks payable to GRRR.

Deadline for entry is midnight, Thursday, July 18, 2024 so start snapping! Winners will be notified by August 15. Calendars will be available at all GRRR events starting with the Rescue Reunion Picnic and on our website.

Thanks and Good Luck!



Horizontal shots like this!



NOT like this...
this is vertical!



Golden Angel: Finley

by Jeannie Miller

Finley is a beautiful cream-colored, two-year-old Golden boy living with his owner in Montrose, Colorado. Young Golden Retrievers are notorious for getting into mischief. They love to chew lots of things and left unattended, they will often eat toys, clothes, rocks, etc. I bet many of you have found colorful surprises in your young dog's poo at pooper scooper time! Sometimes they eat too much too quickly and it can cause big problems.

It appears that this is exactly what Finley did. His owner noticed that he had stopped eating and was acting lethargic and sick. He took him to a local veterinarian who suspected that he might have an intestinal obstruction from eating things he shouldn't. This can be very serious and fatal if not addressed. Time is of the essence because the intestine can become necrotic and the tissue may die. This is not recoverable. The vet explained this to the owner and told him that they should do an exploratory surgery ASAP. The owner was not able to pay for the surgery and was considering euthanizing the dog. The vet offered another solution. He said that if the owner would consider releasing the dog to GRRR, that we might take him in and pay for his medical care. The vet called Mary Kenton. We all know what Mary said! Thankfully, the owner did what was best for his dog and released him to GRRR. We told the vet to go forward with doing whatever was needed to help little Finley.

Surgery was performed and rope-like material plus plastic pieces were removed from his intestinal tract. It looked like he had eaten a towel, candy wrappers, and tin foil. The poor guy was very sick and kept in the ICU at the vet clinic for several days for observation. He began to gain some strength and it seemed that he would recover. We were very thankful. We arranged for one of our volunteers, Joel Carmichael, to make the 3.5 hour drive to Grand Junction to pick him up.

When he arrived back at Phoebe's Place, Mary decided that he should still be constantly observed. One of the Vet Techs at the vet hospital we use agreed to take Finley home. He continued to improve there and she told everyone at the vet clinic what a sweet dog he is. One of the Vets, Dr. Segal met Finley, fell in love with him right away, and adopted Finley. We are very happy for both of them! In all, his care cost over \$4000 but his life was saved and he will be loved and cared for the rest of his life. Hooray for happy endings and thank you for your donations to the Golden Angel Fund. 💙



Angel Update: Bruce Wayne

by Pattie Kalleky

Batman, formerly known as "Bruce Wayne," is now Crue! We were blessed tremendously to take Crue home on New Years Eve, 2023. We were told that Crue grew up in Nebraska and was an "outside dog" for his three and a half years prior to meeting us. We were also told that because he spent much of his time chained to a post, he had behavioral problems, especially with other dogs. In fact, the day we visited GRRR, Crue was spending time in his kennel, mostly on his own because he had been involved in a couple of altercations with other dogs. We noticed him while walking one of the other dogs and decided to take a closer look.

We were told that if we were to adopt Crue, he would not be able to be around other dogs due to his behavioral issues; this included dog parks and doggie day care. We were even advised that Crue would most likely have to be an only dog for the rest of his life. This didn't deter us from getting up close and personal with him that day, and he immediately just nuzzled his sweet nose in our laps. Well, I guess you can say that it was love at first sight! My husband and I fell in love with him instantly, and while Crue was not really looking his best (skin and coat problems, mites in his ears and even a few nicks and cuts around his nose), we knew he was for us!

Over the three months he's been home with us, we have fallen further in love with Crue. It is clear to us that Crue is a lover, not a fighter as we once thought. He brings us constant affection in the form of cuddles and nuzzles. Crue immediately took to becoming part of our pack and sleeps with us each night. He spent three weeks at Come, Sit, Stay Pet Training in Littleton, where he learned how to swim, fetch, sleep in a crate, and most important, how to be just as affectionate with other doggos as he is with us humans. He just had to learn that dogs don't have to be a threat to his safety, and that most dogs are so much fun to play with. Crue hardly ever has a bad word to say; he rarely barks, but yesterday an ambulance went by and we did hear his primitive howl! It was incredibly cute to hear him speak in his native language!

We lost two English Creams over the past two years and we never thought we could love another dog like we loved our Keegan and Camden. We were wrong. Little Crue is the newest member of our crew and we are incredibly blessed to have him in our lives. Thank you to all the kind folks at GRRR for giving him the love he needed to make it to his forever home! We promise to love him completely – FUR-ever!

Please send donations to: GRRR, 15350 W. 72nd Avenue, Arvada, CO 80007 (make check payable to GRRR with "Golden Angel Fund" in the memo) or donate at goldenrescue.com/golden-angel-fund. Thank you!



Finley by Mary and Gary Owens



I owe GRRR so much for taking me in and finding my forever home. Even though I was old and thin, you had faith I would find a forever home to live my Best Life and I sure did!

Once I got to my new home, I saw a heart vet who said I had cancer, and there was nothing they could do because I was so very old and thin. My new Mom and Dad said it was freeing in an odd sort of way, and they would do all they could to ensure that I would live my Best Life, each and every day. My new family put all their energy into putting weight on me, giving me the best hugs and kisses, and letting me enjoy my final days. No more groomers, no more vet visits, just wonderful food, meanderings twice a day, and I only had to take medicines that made me feel good.

I was so lucky; my family was home most of the time. During the day I'd sit with my Mom as she enjoyed retirement. She would cook me salmon every week. I really loved those salmon skins and the tasty puppy food! Evenings were the best: my Dad and I would have nightly chats where we would talk about our day. He would always tell me how handsome I was and made sure my face and eyes were clean every day. My favorite part of the night was when we'd all sit together while I did my job: protecting my family from the two-dimensional critters on the TV. I also patrolled the house 2-3 times a night to keep them all safe.

I do miss making snow angels. My Mom and Dad loved them so much, I made a point to make them every time I went outside, even when the snow had melted. Best of all, they never got upset when I brought snow and mud into the house!

When it was my time, they had a nice vet come over to help me cross over at home. They stayed by my side until the very end, just like they promised!

To my Forever Mom and Dad: I am at peace now and I thank you for the best 5 months. I truly had my Best Life! Now, I am having a great time with the family of critters who crossed over before me. We send our love and we do wish that this side of the Rainbow Bridge had visiting hours, as we miss you both so much.

Please do not weep too long, as there is another senior dog just waiting for your love. Until we meet again, I know that I'll be forever in your hearts. When you think of me, and remember the snow angels I made, just think of how great those snow angels would be now that I have my wings!

Love always,
Finley! 💙

Bertha by Gayla & Mike Fogle

I never thought I would be sending this in such a short time. Bertha has been with us 9 months and she died yesterday. She became sick last Tuesday, breathing heavily, lethargic and stopped eating. Our vets and the emergency hospital shared the opinion that it was an aggressive cancer of the lung. By Sunday she had crashed. She ate some chocolate and crackers and we eased her in to her next life. We thought we would have her a long time since she was only 4. Our hearts are broken but we feel lucky to have had her.

Bertha was such a character, and we learned to love the stubborn streak. We never went anywhere quickly because of all the people who wanted to visit with her! She was a fantastic traveler and went with us back and forth to Texas where my mother was in a nursing home. We lost Mom in January at the age of 99, and we stayed in an AirBNB that didn't allow dogs. I didn't realize this until we were checking in. They met Bertha and let us keep her with us. She went with us everywhere and was beloved by all.

Bertha gave us so many funny moments. She was an escape artist bar none! She could open doors and let herself out, so we started various methods of "baby proofing!" She could get out of a door that was locked, bolted, and had a safety bar under the knob! We had to change the bolt out for a lock with a key and then hang the key out of her reach! Our front door looks like Freddie Kruger left Elm Street and moved in with us.

She was a counter surfer as well! One day we picked up the remnants of a bread basket off the kitchen floor. The bread was completely missing and we thought she had eaten it. We found muffins under a chair in the living room. Two nights later she came running into the room with the missing loaf of bread in her mouth! She was so proud of herself! Bertha also once pulled a box of donuts off the counter and ate them all. The

box was so clean we could have returned it to Dunkin'!

She really was the celebrity of our neighborhood. She wasn't fond of walking, which was beneficial because everyone stopped to visit with her. Neighbors knew her walking schedule and would happen to come out when Bertha and dad were at their house! It usually took them 30 minutes to traverse four houses to the end of the block and home again!

At the end of day when we said "Let's go to bed," she pranced down the hall and hopped on her bed with her blanket! After lights out, she would come over to my side and sleep. It is the little things that are really the BIG things in life!

I could go on and on. She was such a love bug and loved cuddling. She was sweeter than all of our Golden Retrievers, which says a lot when one considers how wonderful Golden Retrievers are! All our dogs are loved dearly, but this one was special.



And then there were three...The story of Moby

by Francie Rakiec

On 4/13/24, we had to say goodbye to our sweet Moby. Moby was 12 years old and two months when he left us. He first came to GRRR when he was found as a stray in Utah. He and his little doggy friend were found on the side of the highway not once but twice. When his owners didn't come to get them the second time they were picked up, one of our volunteers saw him on the shelter's website and contacted us. As soon as Mary and I saw that beautiful Landseer Newfoundland, of course we said yes. He truly could have been a show dog if it wasn't for his jack o' lantern teeth. At the time of his arrival to GRRR, he was 10 years



old. I remember praying and asking for just one year with him, and one year turned into two and then I prayed for two more years. I have to say I am very happy that Moby's previous owners didn't care enough about him to come and get him because that meant that Wade and I were blessed to have him in our lives.

Moby was such a wonderful guy. Everyone loved him and he loved everyone. He loved coming to work with me every day at Phoebe's Place and getting so much love and attention from the volunteers. Some of his favorite volunteers included the cheese lady a.k.a. Cindy, Simone, who gave him lots of love and a special good luck charm when he was having some medical problems in the Summer of 2023, and of course Dr. Allen Harris, who used to have Newfies himself.

Moby was definitely a fighter. In the Summer of 2023, he stopped wanting to eat, and after many vet visits he was diagnosed with two heart conditions. Once he got on his meds, he was a new man. He did so great for almost a year and then he stopped wanting to eat again. We went to the vet and specialists many times and they couldn't find anything wrong with him. His ultrasound was good. His heart was even better and his blood work was great for an old man. I had a hard time accepting the fact that old age was finally catching up to him.

Moby truly was one of the most wonderful dogs we have ever had. Our house now has a little too much room, the bedrooms are a little too quiet without Moby and Fang having snoring competitions, there's a little less slobber, and my heart is a little less full in his absence.

I know Moby knows how much he was loved. That boy got more kisses than any dog in the world, and every time I gave him kisses he would tolerate it for a couple of minutes and then he would give me the side eye and say "enough, mom stop being a smother".

I know we gave him the best life we could, but my heart is still broken. He truly made this world a better place and me a better dog mom. I'm grateful that we had him for two years, but I truly wish we would've had him from the beginning. He was such an amazing guy and we will miss him so very much. Until we meet again, buddy. Have fun with your fur siblings and your grandma in heaven. Your mom, dad, Fang, Jackson and even little Princess Ivy, love you more than you could possibly know. 💙

In Memory

Max

by Lanny Profer

Thank you Mary Kenton and GRRR for changing our lives. We adopted Lexie the ginger Golden Retriever in 2008. Sadly, she passed in 2014. Lexie loved everyone, never barked at other dogs, and would walk without a leash wherever we went, never getting more than a few feet away. When we reached the first corner on our morning walk, she would plant her feet - determined to go in the direction of Cheesman Park. We loved her more than I can say. I didn't expect her exit from our lives would leave us so bereft. We scattered some of her ashes in a grove of trees in Cheesman Park. It has now been almost ten years and I cannot walk through that grove without tears in my eyes.

In May of 2015 we adopted Max the Golden doodle with wavy hair and strong opinions. He was filled with exuberance, boundless energy and quirks. He hated Bernese Mountain dogs and when one appeared, he would bark and pull on the leash for half a block. He was a determined - but mostly unskilled - chaser of squirrels. When he spotted one he would nearly dislocate my shoulder pulling the leash. When the leash stopped him he would chew on it in frustration. As far as he was concerned, women were okay but men had to prove themselves before they would be allowed a pet or get a lean. Max's favorite person was a neighbor up the street. If John was outside when we passed, Max would go bounding over and hit John like a linebacker.

Max's humor was perverse. He would lie in wait looking out of the wrought iron fence. When a passerby rounded a big shrub in front, Max would come barking and crashing toward the fence, inducing a near heart attack reaction, all the while wagging his tail.

On warm days we often stopped at a coffee shop next to the Botanic Gardens. I would clip Max's leash to a patio table and go inside to get a croissant we would share. One day while I was inside paying, I looked down and Max was standing next to me. Drawing on his Houdini magic, he had slipped his leash and rushed to the coffee shop door. A couple approaching assumed correctly he wanted to go inside and opened the door for him. There was laughter from the wait staff and many of the customers.

Walks were high on Max's list of favorite things. Every morning he could count on my frittering time away looking for things and selecting the proper clothes to go on a walk to Cheesman Park. When frustration got too great, Max would sit in front of me and slap my leg with a paw. That's when I knew he was getting impatient.

Max and Lexi's adoptions were the greatest gifts we ever received. As my 24/7 companions for more than fifteen years, Lexie and Max taught me how devotion could be shared between a dog and a person. When he came over and put his head in my lap, my day was made.

Now when I come through the door and he is not there, tears well up and I know it will always be that way. I am left with photographs and memories of the fun times and routines we shared, but it will never be enough. 💙



Goldens in Golden

Goldens in Golden was a good turnout even with a wet snow storm! Many people visited our booth and donated over \$1,000 for this 4th annual Golden gathering in Golden! And the pups loved the Pup Cups of whipped cream!



Have a Heart for Bruce Wayne

Our annual Have a Heart for one of our Golden Angels raised over \$3,000 in donations! Bruce Wayne came from a commercial breeder and was left outside by himself all the time. When he got to GRRR, we found his skin was raw and infected and his ears were very sore. Flies had been biting his ears for a long time. He also had mange and had a lump removed. Bruce Wayne loves attention and took in every bit of gentle kindness that we gave him. He is now in his forever home where he will get the love he so deserves! Thank you for donating to the Golden Angel Fund to help sweet dogs like Bruce, now Crue.

Betty White Challenge

The legacy of Betty White will continue with fans supporting one of her most cherished causes. Her birthday is January 17, and in 2022 when she would have turned 100, the internet rallied behind her with the #BettyWhiteChallenge, where people were asked to donate money to animal welfare groups annually on her birthday in her name. Betty was a well-known supporter of animal rights. Millions of dollars are donated every year, including \$976 to GRRR this year. Thank you! We know Betty is smiling.



Porsche Club Event

The Porsche Club of the Rockies selects a charity each year for one of their major events, and in 2024, GRRR was the chosen beneficiary. As part of this honor, we were invited to participate in the club's new member event held on March 9th. The event was attended by over 100 people, and a stunning lineup of Porsches graced the occasion.

GRRR had its own booth at the event where we showcased a few of our beloved alumni pups (including Millie pictured in front of a Porsche)—living proof of our impactful work. Additionally, during the announcement speeches, GRRR had the opportunity to share our mission and passion for rescuing Golden Retrievers. The result? A successful day for GRRR, with almost \$500 in donations raised and another \$451 from the Club. It's heartwarming to see the community come together to support such a worthy cause!

Golden Retriever Rescue of the Rockies

**15350 W. 72nd Avenue
Arvada, CO 80007**

hotline: 303/279-2400
info@goldenrescue.com
www.goldenrescue.com
Board Of Directors

Officers:

Judi Servoss (President)
Marci Auston (Vice President)
Mike DeGroff (Vice President)
Roxanne Sabin (Secretary)
Mark Springston (Treasurer)

Directors at Large:

Mary Kenton
Jeannie Miller
Josie Stewart
Laura Miller

Executive Director - Francie Rakiec
francie.rakiec@goldenrescue.com
Newsletter Editor - Debbie Stratton
debbie.davis@goldenrescue.com



Upcoming Events

Spring Fling

Sunday, May 19 at Phoebe's Place

2025 Calendar Photo Contest

Start snapping now for the 2025 calendar contest!
Deadline is July 18.

GRRR Gala

Saturday, June 22
Social Capitol, Arvada
Virtual Silent Auction is June 15-June 22

Senior Play Day for Dogs 8 and over

Sunday, August 24 at Phoebe's Place

Annual Rescue Reunion Picnic

Sunday, September 15 at Phoebe's Place

Halloween Party

Saturday, October 19 at Phoebe's Place

More info at <https://www.goldenrescue.com/events>

“A Golden Retriever Can Change Your Life!”®

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

Golden Retriever Rescue of the Rockies is dedicated to rescue, placement and public awareness, to ensure that Golden Retrievers are adopted by people who are able to provide a safe, loving home.

Applications to adopt a Golden are available on our website: goldenrescue.com

Please accept my Membership in GRRR (includes quarterly newsletter plus free attendance at all events and reunions)

I would like to receive my newsletter:

via mail (black & white print) or via email (color PDF...save GRRR postage/printing costs!) \$50 year \$ _____

Please accept my additional tax deductible donation to help Golden Retrievers where needed most:

\$250+ Golden Champion \$100 Golden Hero \$50 Golden Star \$ _____

Interested in volunteering? Go to www.goldenrescue.com to fill out the volunteer application. Thanks!

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Please mail to: Golden Retriever Rescue of the Rockies • 15350 W. 72nd Ave. • Arvada, CO 80007

Thank you for your support!
goldenrescue.com