# NORCAL GOLDEN RETRIEVER RESCUE

A nonprofit, volunteer organization dedicated to finding new homes for displaced Golden Retrievers in Northern California

VOLUME XXVII, ISSUE NO. 1 ~ SPRING 2021



## Life's Been Good to Me

by Hannah O'Neill

Cabo was brought back from Mexico by a NGRR volunteer in 2019. He was a nice dog but in need of a family that could give him love and the life he deserved. He now writes us: "I just wanted to send in a little update on my life these days. It sure is great! Dad brushes me a lot to make me look handsome and off we go on our daily walks. I also like to play with my toys, nap in my dog bed, and sunbathe outside. After some practice, I'm enjoying car rides and have been to the beach and the mountains. The ladies at the Starbucks window give me treats. Mom and Dad say I'm a really good boy and bring love, kisses and laughter to their lives. AND...in May 2020, I was promoted to 'Big Brother' to my new baby sister. I never knew that life could be so good. Thank you NGRR for giving me a family that loves me."



Thanks to Hillary Rogers for writing this story.

I believe that there are things that are meant to be. Lovey joining our family turned out to be one of them.

We have always been dog people. After losing our two 12-year-old corgis in late 2019, we were heartbroken. They were the first dogs we had as a family, and they had gone through so many big pieces of life with us, including our son's early childhood. It took us a while to be ready for another dog, but our house always felt like it was missing something without one. We decided that we were ready for a dog and would start to look. We

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# NorCal Golden Retriever Rescue Fund

At the end of last year, we sent out our Rescue Fund letter. The purpose was to raise funds so that we can expand and continue to rescue and relocate Goldens from Bakersfield to the Oregon border. Our donor support last year was wonderful and we thank each and every one of you! Below are the names of those who contributed since September 2020. Many thanks again to all of you – and to those of you who contribute throughout the year.

Best Friend: \$1,000 and up

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Cold Noses: Up to \$99

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Ingrid & Steve Wittenberg

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# Melvin: Peanut Butter Dog Cookie Food Critic



When I heard the Peanut Butter Dog Cookie Recipe was going to be included in the NGRR newsletter, I knew someone needed to taste-test and critique the cookies direct out of the oven, so I volunteered for the job!

I have to tell you, I was a bit skeptical when I watched all the organic ingredients (even the wheat

flour) being mixed together, plus my human mom is not a baker, but these cookies are delicious! So, I give it a Four Paw "Paw" sitively - High Value Treat rating.

Watch for future recipe reviews in upcoming NGRR newsletters.

Your Friend, Melvin

#### PEANUT BUTTER DOG COOKIES

#### **Ingredients**

2 ½ cups whole wheat flour 1 teaspoon baking powder

1 egg

1 cup natural peanut butter (see note below)

1 cup water

2 tablespoons honey

#### **Instructions:**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a large bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and egg. Add peanut butter, water, honey and stir. Batter will be very firm and sticky. Use

Roll out dough on a lightly floured surface, about ½ inch thick. Use a cookie cutter to make shapes. The cookies will not rise much.

Bake 20 minutes.

Store in an airtight container after they are thoroughly cooled and dry. **NOTE:** Make sure the peanut butter does not have xylitol. It is toxic for dogs.

# Meant to Be

knew we wanted a medium/big, cuddly, friendly, fun dog. A Golden Retriever or Golden mix would be ideal. We submitted our applications to rescues and spent hours looking on shelter websites, trying to keep our list of "wants" broad.

We got a call from NGRR. They had a dog looking for a home. I couldn't believe we got the call. Could it mean that it was a "meant to be" thing?

Lovely Lola, nicknamed Lovey, had been abandoned at a shelter in the rain with two of her puppies in a box next to her. She had ear infections and several skin infections, and she was under-nourished. But her foster mom, Holly, was nursing her back to health, and Lola would be looking for a forever home soon. Holly laughingly told me that if we didn't like this dog, we didn't want a Golden Retriever and there was something wrong with us.

We got to meet on Mother's Day.

(Continued from front page)



And it was meant to be. Lovey ran to us, greeting us with smiles and curiosity. And we were in love with her immediately. She was perfect. Her infections were gone, and her coat was growing back in. She was

happy, beautiful, and getting healthy.

Lovey didn't take long to adapt to our family. She loves walking on the trails around our house, has claimed multiple spots around the house as hers, and is involved in every game we play. She loves to meet new people and dogs, and she wants to play with all of them. As we walk past a line of cars at a stop light, she looks confused, wondering why everyone isn't paying attention to her. But we rarely get through a walk without a stranger complimenting her. And one of our favorite things is that we get to have regular play dates with Holly and her dog, Quincy.

As the stress of COVID-related shutdowns and restrictions ebbs and flows, Lovey is always there with a smile and requests for cuddles, belly rubs, or walks. The best de-stressor for us. She looks after us as much as we look after her.

We couldn't think of a more perfect name for her than Lovey.

# Famine to Feast

by Duane Schmidt

Bo was turned in at the SPCA. It was believed that he was put outside by his owner and ignored, with no protection, no love, and minimal food. This poor boy was so underweight that his bones were protruding. The best way to describe him when he came to NGRR is he had PTSD.

Bo was very frightened. He was spooked by the wind, trucks, balloons, and things that jumped out or even big green telephone boxes. When the cats would jump onto the oak table, it would squeak... and would startle Bo. At first, I had to drag him out of his safety zone (the bedroom) to do his thing. He was afraid of everything.

With much love, encouragement, and patience, he would go for short walks. He was good at the dog park even if he stayed away from other dogs. His true loving personality has come out over time to the extent that now we can hike canyon trails off leash. When he gets so far ahead that I can no longer see him, I stop and soon he comes bounding back to me with a huge smile on his face. He loves greeting families, especially kids, on the trail and will sit patiently while they pet him. Our family cats have become his sleeping mates, and are often found grooming each other in one bed. Bo's head hangs off the side as the cats take up more than their share of the bed. He watches TV and loves being a 90-pound lap dog with the grandkids.

To this day he has not barked...on occasion he will "talk"...I think that if he barks he is afraid it will bring attention to him. He has turned out to be very attached to me, even sleeps next to me in bed...what a change.

I mentioned at the beginning that Bo was emaciated and undernourished. WELL....That 52-pound skinny boy has turned into a 90-pound sturdy boy with a coat of pure silk.





# Tribute to Bert

by John Gretz

Bert was a Dog so Golden & Red, He would lay at night by the side of our bed. He might snore and kick and fuss in the night, But by morning to the ready at the first sign of light!

To him the tennis ball was a god!

It meant more than digging up dirt or fresh sod.

He would chew and suck on the ball's yellow flesh,

To be chased in the vineyard was as to be blessed!

To crunch and swallow any kibble or food, Would catapult him to a state of joy and good mood! The dream then the act of being happily fed, Would return him the comfort of his L.L. Bean bed.

### President's Message

SPRING HAS SPRUNG! The trees are beginning to flower, the evening light lasts a bit longer, and we're starting to have hope that we'll be able to embrace the "new normal" soon. While COVID-19 abruptly curtailed NGRR's operations in 2020, we are hopeful that the things we took for granted before last year may resume soon, at least to some extent. Because many families were at home during the pandemic and so many pets adopted last year, NGRR saw fewer Goldens surrendered or in shelters. After the shelter-in-place orders were put in place, we closed adoption applications last May for volunteer safety and because we had very few Goldens and many more applicants.

2021 feels different, and a bit better. Some of our family and friends have received their vaccinations, parts of California are seeing fewer COVID cases, and counties are slowly re-opening activities. NGRR has had a few more Goldens come into our care so far this year, which makes us cautiously optimistic that

there will be more Goldens to place with adopting families than last year. **NGRR will be re-opening adoption applications on April 1** – see our website for details. As restrictions ease, please be patient as we continue to adhere to socially distanced, maskwearing encounters, preferably outdoors.

NGRR has launched an e-newsletter, *GoldenGram*, which comes out six times a year, so be sure to sign up for that to get more frequent updates on our activities. You can also follow us on Facebook and Instagram for pictures of beautiful Goldens to help tide you over until we can get together in person. Since the next NGRR print newsletter comes out in September, let me close with my gratitude for this amazing Golden-loving community and my hope that we'll get to gather in person in late summer to share and enjoy our treasured Goldens and each other!

Karen Shore

# Debee Armstrong: Thank You

NGRR wishes to acknowledge **Debee Armstrong** and give special thanks for her volunteer dedication over the past several years as the Editor of the NGRR newsletter. While she will continue as a contributing author, she is stepping down as our Editorin-Chief. Thank you Debee for your continuing support!

# Cooper

by Debbie Hitch

It didn't take us long to fall in love with Cooper! After losing our last Golden, Leroy, back in December, we weren't sure if we were ready for a young pup like Cooper to enter our lives. My husband and I are both retired, and after cohabitating with our precious senior dog Leroy, we had become accustomed to our slow paced routine.

A few months after the passing of Leroy, we received a call from NGRR letting us know that there was a 2-year-old Golden Retriever who needed a new home. He was coming from a busy family with kids and multiple dogs. The situation sounded like he was being a bit overlooked with the hustle and bustle of a young family. We were anticipating this young pup would be full of energy, and we were hopeful our home would be the best arrangement for him.

The day we met Cooper, he made an instant impression on the family.



He strutted through the front door and immediately began playing tug-o-war, and searching for ear rubs. There was an instant bond between Cooper and my husband. For the first few days, Cooper spent most of his time ping-ponging back and forth around our home looking for attention and snacks. He was doing his best to settle into a new environment.

It didn't take him long to make himself

at home. Cooper has a lovable personality that grows on everyone he meets. Our adult kids enjoy coming over and chasing him around the backyard. My son likes to wrestle with him for his cherished Frisbee. We've noticed a bit of a mischievous side that only seems to add to his charm. Cooper adores attention, and he loves to be the ham in our family.

It's been about a year now since we've had Cooper and we couldn't love him more. He definitely has special quirks such as throwing his body at you for scratches. He loves to greet you at the door, tail wagging, a chew toy in mouth, and ready to play. He loves to sneak up on the couch when he's left alone at home (even though he's not allowed to be up there). Cooper loves his walks rain or shine, and he will pout and moan excessively until it's time. We've never seen a dog so ferociously push his way into a car. This dog loves car rides. We consider ourselves extremely lucky to have been matched with such a great dog.

## IN TRIBUTE

In honor of "Toby" Alice Allick

"In memory of Carol T. Stewart, who was passionate about Golden Retrievers" Angela Vargas

In honor of Pat Lynch (Aunt Pat, the Great!) Ann Rosenthal

In memory of "Buddy O'Brien" Bob Corman

"In memory of 'Amber.' She brought us 12 years of joy."

Carol Beck

"In memory of 'Luigi' who graced us with his noble, extraordinary, gentle magic."

Caroline, Fong, Michaela, Michael and Shelby Wang

"In memory of 'J' - a very fine dog and beloved companion."

Charles J Squatriglia

In memory of Fran Roth's sweet Golden/Lab mix "Nellie"

Christina Millard

In honor of James Healy Christopher Healy

In memory of "Blaze"

Dave and Adrienne Yarnold

In honor of Carole Franke. "To the best mom ever, who inspired me to get involved in Rescue as well!"

Debbi Behrman

In memory of Jan's dog *"Jamie"* Debbie and Bill Sander

In loving memory of "Dublin," a most special boy

Deborah Woollett

In honor of "Milo"

Dede and Homer Alexander

In honor of Eric Evans Diane Evans

"In honor of Suzanne Stout, a wonderful human who adores our Golden Girls as much as we do. She cares for 'Ellis' and 'Penny' when we are out of town, giving us peace of mind that the Golden Girls are in loving care." Dianne Morton

"In memory of 'Maverick,' 7 years old and gone too soon!"

Donna Kiernan

In memory of Fred Yost Elisabeth Yost

In honor of Chris and Misato Weber Elissa Preston

"In memory of Uncle Jim & Aunt Nicky, the best parents a dog could ask for. They had two wonderful boys, 'Titus' and 'Riley,' who they adopted from NGRR that brought so much love. We didn't get to meet them, but Mom tells us they were almost as sweet as we are. We are so lucky to have Uncle Jim and Aunt Nicky in our lives and to be their pseudo-grandchildren. Rescue dogs are the best! All our love, 'Dodger' and 'Finley.'" Ellis Juhlin

In honor of "Niner" Eric Bower

"In memory of 'Henry.' Henry was the most fun-loving foster dog a family could ask for in the short time he spent with us. He became the big brother to 'Chase' 1½ and 'Jaxson' 6 mo. Many lessons were taught."

Georgine Nordin

"In honor of 'Cookie.' Thanks to NGRR for bringing us together."

Gordon DelFaro

"In honor of 'Joey' James, a dream come true... full of life, love and such grace. Just perfect."

Gordy Kjer and Martha Geoffroy

In honor of "Ginger" Gregory Locher

"In memory of 'Millie' who was our sweet girl from NGRR. While we miss her every day, she is forever in our hearts."

Harold and Janet Freiman

In honor of Susan Hall Heather Shay

In memory of Mrs. Ginny Holmes Ingrid Repins

"In memory of 'Ginger.' We are so grateful to NGRR for connecting us with sweet Ginger 12 years ago. We never expected we'd get to have her in our family for that long. Her rocky start in life couldn't diminish her sweet soul and devotion to people. Though we said goodbye on October 2, she's in our hearts forever."

Jane and Kevin Dick

"In honor of Meera Riner. Happy Birthday, Meera! A special gift in honor of your giving spirit, compassion, and love for your two Goldens."

Jane Riner

"In honor of 'Bahloo' and 'Zeus' who celebrated their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday on Christmas Day. Thank you for your continued work." Jean Connors

"In honor of sweet 'Moxie.' She brings great joy to everyone who knows her. Thanks for the wonderful work you do for the Goldens." Jean Connors In honor of Janet Peacock Jeanne Sinsheimer

In honor of Janie Hitchcock Jennifer Lamar

In memory of Jim Thomas' dog "Parker" Jennifer Pixton

In memory of "Merlin" and in honor of "Daisy" and "Sky"
JoAnn Bonner

In memory of "Nipper" John Hall

In memory of "Ruger" & "Dixie" John Rutkowski

"In memory of Rose Kinton. My husband and I rescued 'Rose,' our Beautiful Golden Girl, in February of 2016. Ron died in October of that year, and Rose became my strength, always by my side. We rode the storm together. In January 2019, she and I moved to Lincoln Hills from the East Bay. She and I made new friends on many walks in the Foothills as we started a new life. She was a wonderful companion and best friend. She will forever live in my heart."

Joyce Kinton

In loving memory of "Journey," Laurie and Mark Berman's adored beautiful Golden boy Joyce Richardson

"In honor of Gerry Dinneen. Merry Christmas, 2020!" Judi Dinneen

In honor of Kristin Luker Kelly Luker

In memory of Max Kenneth Nahigian

In memory of Tanya Kevin and Barbara Zaney

In honor of Gerry Dinneen Kevin Dinneen

In memory of "*Max*," the Golden Retriever Kristine Mietzner

"In honor and memory of 'Ben.' He'll be missed forever by Nancy Fedders."

Kristine Williams

"In memory of 'Rose' Kinton, Golden Retriever. The little girl is greatly missed." Larry Cannon

"In memory of 'Hannah,' our first Golden, always missed, and forever in our hearts. And in honor of 'Kynzi,' turning six in 2021, always a puppy, lovingly irksome and inspirational."

Larry Patten

In honor of Lucy Migdol Laura Williams "In honor of my rescues 'Gracie,' 'Daisy' and 'Melvin.'"

Laurel Mechling

"In memory of 'Tierra,' our beloved wild girl from Guatemala. Her resilience and sweetness are unforgettable. We are grateful."

Leena Krasno

In honor of "Buckley" Leslie Code

"In the name of all of our Golden rescue children: 'Barley,' 'Quincey,' 'Bear,' 'Sadie,' 'Oliver' and 'Lilly!'"

Lief Koepsel

In memory of Carol Tooker Stewart Lois Hedman

In honor of "Luke" and all the hard work NGRR does

Loris and Glen Mills

"In support of senior Goldens and in honor of all the Goldens who have touched my life including 'Amber,' 'Daisy,' 'Winchester' & 'Nala.'"

Louise Korn

"In memory of 'Godiva,' a sweet Dachshund who had a long life and was loved by Nancy DeClue."

Louise Korn

In honor of "Dudley" Lynn Nickles

In honor of Pam Catlett Lynn Thompson

In memory of Nancy Bailey Marcella Gagne

"In honor of Jim & Mary Zell, dedicated Golden lovers. They have owned many dogs over the years including rescued Goldens 'Willie,' 'Rusty' and now 'Maverick.' They are wonderful pet parents showering love and attention on their fur babies including multiple walks per day and yummy treats." Marney, Bill, Will and Becky Gundlach

In memory of Eileen Kopp Mary Trombley

In memory of "Brandy" & "Goldie" Mel Kennedy

In memory of "Bohdi" Melinda Griffith

In remembrance of our Golden Retriever "Barkley"

Morgan McGuire

In honor of "Cruz" Nancy Lindman

"In memory of sweet 'Buddy,' 'Harpo,' and all the dogs Deb and Ray have cared for and loved."

Paul and Carol Rioux

"In memory of Pam Ammondson. Pam was a loving, kind and caring person; and a dear friend of our kids' 'grandmother' and fellow pet lover Florence Yukon. I also had the privilege of being Pam's Family First home visitor when Peter was an infant. She was a devoted Mama, wanting to learn all she could. Our hearts ache for Karl and Peter and all of her family for their loss. May her memory be for a blessing. Love, Nancy and Ed Sherman and Family."

Nancy Sherman

In memory of Daniel Lonegran The Olympic Club

In memory of Noelene Byars Penny Hurley

In honor of "Toby" Randi Brenowitz

In loving memory of "Sky" Richard Dunckel and Paula Tokugawa

"In honor of 'Maximus Aurelius,' adopted from NGRR and loved dearly by our family." Sadhana Franchi

"We thank you Amanda, from the bottom of our heart for getting us in touch with Harley's owner. 'Harley' is thriving with us and loves the backyard and the trails. She has even shed 10 pounds! Even though she's overweight, she's agile and enthusiastic for any outdoor/physical activity. We love our 5th family member so much!"

Sandy Pimenta

"In honor of Elaine Erickson & Annie – We love you!"

Sara Steffen

"In honor of 'Sophie' and in memory of our amazing always remembered Golden girls 'Peaches' & 'Gracie.'"

Scott and Sally Evans

In honor of Dudley Nickles Shannon Susick

"In memory of 'Windy Ratanapreukskul,'
April 4, 2006 – August 1, 2020. My life
changed in an amazing way when Windy
came into my life. It was clear that she would
be my baby and my best friend. She unveiled
her true gift as a service animal when my
life and needs changed. There are no words
and no end to how I can express my love and
commitment to my guardian angel."
Sirithory Potonoprovedsial

Sirithorn Ratanapreukskul

"In honor of our sweet 'Annie girl' (9 years old) and 'Teddy boy' (4 years old)."
Stephen Broccoli and Laura Nakashima

In memory of "Brandi" Rose, the beloved labradoodle loved by Renee and David Rose Susan and Donald Ludwig

"In memory of 'Grace Almlie,' who we adopted from NGRR in April 2010. She was a very sweet girl who came to us with some issues that we were able to work through over time. She loved to swim and play with other dogs. Sadly, we had to say goodbye to our party girl in November 2020 due to cancer. We miss her terribly."

Sue and Jim Almlie

In honor of Bing Liem Susan Liem

In memory of Ed & Monique's beautiful Golden senior "Buddy" Susan Ludwig

In honor of 24K "Daisy" and 6K "Sweet Pea" Suzanne Krakover-Nickel

"In memory of our beloved Goldens:
'Rascal,' 'Kimo,' 'Cody,' 'Dusty,' 'Lulu' &
'Amber.' Their memories live forever in our hearts every single day."
Teresa Chinn and Paul Miyashiro

In honor of Karen Gill Terri Locke

In honor of my friend Jean Connors Terry Sechrist

In memory of Dorothy Hudecek Thomas Hudecek

"In memory of Ms. Barbara DiGiorgio, lover of all dogs, especially Goldens."
Tom and Shelle Pentes

"In memory of 'Joey,' beloved Golden of my dear friend Barbara." Victoria Damestoy

"In memory of 'Spark,' our loving 10-yearold Golden Retriever, who passed away Dec 04, 2019. He succumbed to an aggressive bout of cancer. We truly miss that loving soul. He was an angel and brought love & joy to everyone he met. We miss you Spark. XOXO -Vijay, Preeti and Dhruv." Vijay Ubhayaker

#### Memorial & Tribute Donations

Donations may be made to memorialize or pay tribute to a special person, Golden, or pet of any kind. Donate online at www.ngrr.org or send your donation and information (for whom the donation is being made and their address, your name, address, and phone number, plus words of personalization) to:

#### NGRR 405 El Camino Real, Suite 420 Menlo Park, CA 94025-5240

A handwritten letter will be sent shortly thereafter acknowledging that a donation was made to NGRR. Give us a call if you have any questions.

# Still Going Strong

by Bob and Debee Armstrong

Julie is one of our Golden oldies because at 11 years, she's still going strong.

Julie was our first foster. At around a year old, this filthy, skinny frightened stray was brought to a shelter by some kind stranger, where NGRR was lucky to get her. We expected puppy energy, but instead, Julie was a dog log. I remember taking her to bed with us where she lay placidly between Bob and me, showing no response to cuddling.

Julie had no interest in toys. She had no interest in other dogs. She did not want to eat. We had to coax her with bits of kibble soaked in butter off our palms. She'd take a tiny lick and back away. I hand-fed her canned food for several days before she would even touch a bowl. All Julie wanted to do was hide under Bob's desk. We were so disappointed, as our own Goldens were lively, people-oriented beasts.

Today, as experienced fosters, we recognize shelter shock: a dog can be so traumatized by shelter life that it takes a while to recover. And Julie did bounce back. She began to wag her tail and carry toys around. She began to ask to be petted.

When a special couple in Palo Alto adopted Julie, love poured forth on all sides. Julie transformed into the quintessential Golden, always with a toy in her mouth, her tail constantly waving, eager to go on walks with her new family. Julie's new mom is a Hebrew teacher, so Julie of course had to learn Hebrew too. She knows many commands in both languages!

But because of her earlier trauma, her new family didn't want her to have to spend any time away from people she trusted. When they go on vacation, we are the chosen sitters.



Julie has been coming to our house now for many years. When their family car turns the corner to come down our street, Julie starts a high-pitched happy wailing because she recognizes the neighborhood and cannot wait to see us and our three Goldens.

I too had to learn Julie's commands in Hebrew, because she likes to pretend she no longer understands English. When she's at our house she'd rather play than stay, as she so loves to scamper about. She loves rides in the car and interacting with anyone who will give her attention. She has gone on socialization walks with guide dog puppies and attended Flyball practice, watched our dogs in agility training, and happily participated in dog scout meetings. She goes to class with her adopted mom and loves all her students. We have seen no evidence of dog log since those very early days.

Julie tore her Achilles tendon a few years ago when she leapt a bit too hard in play as her age caught up with her. But she recovered and now moves perhaps a bit slower. She still loves soft plush toys and snuggling. And she still is a bilingual dog, though she goes to bed faster if you remember to cue her in Hebrew.



# Talla Needs a New Home

by Carol Vasconcellos

Imagine my surprise when I got a call from NGRR about a one-year-old Golden that needed to be surrendered! She had been in a loving home with other pets, but circumstances made it necessary to relinquish her. Can you imagine how hard it was for this loving family to give her up? Can you imagine how excited I was to add a wonderful Golden to my family?

NGRR needed an active, experienced adopter for this rambunctious pup. I was that person. I am taking lessons in patience, humility and empathy from her and I've gained a constant companion around the house and on my six-mile walks each day. Talla is such a gift.

# Lola – Welcome Home

by Valerie Harper

When we first met Lola, we knew we had our work cut out for us. She was very fond of her exceptionally kind foster she had been staying with. But once we got her home, it didn't take long for her to fit right in, playing with our children and swimming with our Chocolate Lab, Tommy. Lola has proven to be one of the most loving and devoted dogs that we have ever met, and she is an absolutely perfect addition to our family.

We are very thankful to have found her through NGRR!



# Goodbye, Old Friend

by Kristine Mietzner

"Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole," said Roger A. Caras. A Golden Retriever named Max made me feel whole. He faithfully loved me until he took his last breath during the 2020 global pandemic.

Max loved water. On eying the Pacific Ocean for the first time, he jumped off a huge boulder and landed safely before racing across the sand and jumping into the surf. He chased rabbits alongside the American River in Sacramento, swam after the birds in the Carquinez Strait on Benicia's waterfront, and waded in the Russian River near Guerneville, California.

The jangle of a leash or the word "walk" never stirred a response from Max. When it was time for a stroll, he silently followed my lead. I could drop his leash and he would stay by my side.

Max insisted on the full measure when it came to walks. Once we were out the door, we crossed the point of no return. If I tried to cut short one of our walks, he would play dead. No amount of coaxing would get him to move until we continued in a forward direction and completed our route.

When my long commute to work made our twice daily walks impossible, I hired a dog walker. He followed her to the front yard, but as soon as she tried to take him away from the house, he froze and refused to move. He pulled the same trick when my cousin Donna visited and tried to take him on a walk while I was at work. With

his nose pressed into a corner of the living room, he was the guardian of the house and wouldn't go anywhere until I returned.

Max hated crowds. "Nope, not today," was his motto when it came to large groups and noise. Nevertheless, like stage parents, my boyfriend Nick and I organized The Golden Retriever Marching Drill Team, a group of dogs and owners who, until the pandemic, walked in the annual Winters Youth Day Parade.

Max shivered with fright when I tried to nudge him into the parade. He hurried back to the front porch to watch from a safe distance. He just wouldn't walk the parade route and so he became the honorary drill team manager.

I suspect he had been bullied when he lived with five other dogs as a puppy. He'd been in a fight before he was surrendered, and he came to me with abrasions, puncture wounds, and lacerations.

Max had food issues. The kibble in his dish always disappeared eventually, but only when I wasn't looking. Like poor Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, who didn't get to play reindeer games, Max must have learned as a puppy to wait to eat until the coast was clear.

He didn't stand a chance when a stray cat came to visit and never left. If the cat climbed on the sofa, he got down. Max left her alone when she curled up right in the middle of his large circular bed. If she nibbled from his food dish, he walked away.

Before I began teleworking, Max met me



by the front door every day at 4 p.m. when I got home from the office. After the stay-at-home orders, he maintained his routine, waiting in the same place at the same time each afternoon, ready for our walk.

While I teleworked, Max followed me from room to room, napping while I sat at my desk. Sadly, the day came when he could not rise on his own without help. He was 13.

For as long as possible, we kept up our routine visits with Nick who lived 30 miles away. Max got more and more reluctant to get in the car and did so with a lot of help. He would put his paws on the floor of the backseat and remained in that position until I lifted his back side and pushed him up into the car.

On what turned out to be his final trip to Nick's house, Max stepped out of the car and collapsed on the street. We carried him to the house on a makeshift stretcher fashioned from a blanket. After that, Nick visited Max at my house more often. Max spent his days cuddled on his bed, with his teddy bear, in the living room. I brought his food and water close enough so he could

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## You Had Me at Hello

Some people describe it as love at first sight, an immediate draw to soulful eyes, a confident gait, or a quirky yet adorable trait. Others describe it as a connection from a stolen kiss or an unexpected hug that knocks them off their feet. Some believe it's a blessing while others think it's luck. They are overwhelmed by love. It's the backstory and bond of the perfect rescue dog.

I don't know if our meeting was providence or serendipity. Either way, thanks to NGRR, it happened for us. We were deeply moved by soulful eyes, impressed by the strength of a gait, and amused by a goofy demeanor. Our love story also has a magical first kiss - a kiss behind the ear. Admittedly, an opportunity I took by my smothering him with a full body hug.

Pages can be filled describing our back story, our bond, and our event-filled days since our first meeting. But, instead of writing, I'm drawn to play and snuggle with the perfect rescue dog, Jake, from NGRR.

Thank you NGRR for the perfect dog and companion. Yes, the perfect rescue dog.





# Dear Abby-Gold

by Deborah Armstrong

Q: My dog loves playing with other doggy friends, but when I take him for walks, he always barks and lunges at other dogs. He growls and snarls and is very scary. It's embarrassing and I don't think he's getting enough exercise, because it's so difficult to walk him.

A: Many dogs can behave aggressively on leash because they are frightened. If they weren't socialized as puppies to strange dogs, they can find encounters stressful, and if they cannot circle and sniff because they are confined by the leash, it can heighten their stress even more.

First, if you want to seriously counter-condition this behavior, you will need to work with a specialist dog trainer who knows how to handle fear and/or aggression. The current popular term for this type of training is a "growly dog" class. A good trainer uses only positive methods – treats and praise to make dogs feel more comfortable in unfamiliar situations.

It sounds like your case is mild since your dog does enjoy playing with others. Simply start exposing your dog to other dogs at a distance and when your dog doesn't react, be sure to offer lots of treats and praise. For example, you can walk past a fenced dog park or yard where dogs are playing, perhaps staying across the street so the dogs are far away.

If your dog can tolerate other dogs at sixty feet, try reducing the distance to fifty feet. Take it very slow, and gradually decrease the distance at which your dog encounters others on walks. This of course can be hard to do, so try taking him for walks at night or early in the morning, especially past fenced yards where other dogs could be out and about but not where uncontrolled encounters can happen on the street.

Be sure you do give him exercise

by lots of romping in your house or yard. Give him as many opportunities to run and play as you can before he goes on a walk, because getting rid of pent-up energy will help him feel less overwhelmed.

Obedience exercises – sit, come, walking on leash – all of these help him bond with you and make him look to you for guidance. You can teach him to look at another barking dog and get a treat, or look at you for a treat. This gives him things to do so he's less likely to react.

You can also train your dog to enjoy staying in a portable folding crate. Take it to parks and drop treats into the crate whenever other dogs go by and he fails to react.

You can also teach your dog to move quickly behind you on command. Practice in your yard first until, with a spoken cue or hand signal, he is able to stand or sit calmly behind you. Then, if there's a dog running towards you on a walk, you can literally have your dog's back. Give him his back command and he can safely hide behind you. Throw a fistful of treats on the ground behind you when the other dog approaches and ask its owner to step away by explaining that your dog is afraid of other dogs. While you engage with the owner, your dog will be distracted, nose to the ground, scrounging up your fistful of treats.

If you meet owners who insist your dog make friends with theirs, you may even have to lie and tell them your dog might bite. This will cause the owner to back up or go away. It's better to do that and communicate to your dog that you will protect him. Once a frightened dog learns to trust and depend on you, much of that fear, along with the leash reactivity, will subside.

# Max

(Continued from page 9)

reach it without getting up. One afternoon, Nick and I carried Max outside on a quilt to give him another day in the sun.

For 11 years, Max had routinely sauntered to the bedroom at 9 pm, but toward the end of his days, he was unable to stand. I held up his back legs and walked him, wheelbarrow-style, to the bedroom. Each morning, about an hour after I started my day, he rose and found me in the dining room, my home office.

On a Wednesday morning, he stayed in the bedroom. When I checked on him, he was alert and smiling as always, but his bed was wet. He'd never had an accident in the house. Alarmed, I called Nick and we took him to the vet. An x-ray showed he had massive arthritis in his spine.

The vet assured us she found no other specific problems. I sensed Max was afflicted with something more serious than normal aging. My mother had died of pancreatic cancer a decade before. Max's body seemed to be shutting down, the way my mother's had during her final days.

Max stopped eating. On a Thursday, he drank water when I put the bowl so close to his big chin that he could extend his tongue and lap it up.

On a Friday, my friend Joan came to say goodbye. "Oh, Kristine! He hasn't blinked since I got here. He's not going to make it through the day." I called Nick who made an appointment with a veterinarian. An injection could help Max pass away peacefully.

I had to get Max to the clinic. Joan, strong and kind, helped carry him to the car on a blanket. "He always loved car rides," she said, casting a positive light on those dark moments. As I drove along the highway with Max in the backseat, I listened to his shallow breathing, until I could no longer hear him. I pulled over, jumped out of the car, opened the back door, and gave him one last hug. He was gone.

I drove to Nick's house, and we took Max to the veterinary clinic. The vet techs came to the car and carried Max inside.

A week later, Max's ashes came home in a small wooden box with his name engraved on a nameplate in beautiful script. When the time is right, we'll scatter Max's ashes at his favorite sites: Carquinez Strait, the Russian River, the American River, and the Pacific Ocean.

His passing leaves me with sweet memories but also a hole in my heart. These days, whenever I pass a body of water, I fondly remember how much Max loved taking a dip and never missed a chance for a do-it-yourself baptism.

Max was my best friend for 11 Golden years. I miss him so much. Goodbye, old friend.

## Donating to NGRR

Since our organization is staffed entirely by volunteers, every penny of your contribution will help pay for veterinary care, food, and other direct expenses required in our work to rescue and find loving homes for Golden Retrievers.

#### Gifts by Credit Card Or Check

A gift by check or credit card may be made outright or as a pledge to be fulfilled over a period of up to five years. If you itemize tax deductions, your contribution is fully deductible up to 50% of your adjusted gross income; any excess can be carried forward for up to five additional years. You may safely donate online at www.ngrr.org. To make a gift by check, mail it to NGRR at our Menlo Park, CA address. To make a gift by credit card, please also tell us the type of credit card, CVV code, card number, expiration date, and name as it appears on the card.

#### Payroll Deduction

The simplest (and most painless) way for many of us to manage our gift giving is with an easy payroll deduction. Each year, United Way, the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), and other charitable campaigns give working people the opportunity to allocate payroll deductions or make a one-time contribution at work. Ask your employer for a Donor Option Card to direct your United Way contribution to NGRR.

#### Matching Gift

Over 6,000 companies encourage their employees' philanthropy through a matching gift program whereby your employer will match your individual donations. This generous program doubles – and sometimes triples – your donation. Ask your human resources department if your employer has such a program. If so, you will be given a matching gift form to send to NGRR with your donation, and we'll do the rest!

#### Appreciated Securities

Your gift of long-term, appreciated securities (stocks, mutual funds and bonds) is exempt from capital gains taxes and, in most cases, enables you to obtain a charitable income tax deduction equal to the market value of the securities at the time of transfer, for up to 30% of your adjusted gross income.

#### Gifts Through Your Estate

For many of us, making a gift through our estate is the most realistic way to make a substantial contribution to NGRR. At the same time, a carefully planned estate gift can reduce or eliminate federal estate taxes, depending upon the size of your estate.

#### Life Income Gifts

You may be able to make a gift and receive direct financial benefits. Some financial vehicles, such as charitable trusts, can provide you and/or your spouse with an income for life and a charitable income tax deduction as well. These vehicles often pay a rate of return that exceeds money market and CD rates. In addition, they typically help avoid capital gains taxes and reduce estate taxes. Gifts can also be made through your estate while preserving assets for your current needs.

#### Gifts of Real Estate

You can make a gift of commercial or residential real estate and receive substantial financial benefits. If you give the property outright, you can qualify for a charitable income tax deduction based on the appraised value of the property.

#### Vehicle Donations

You may donate a vehicle through NGRR's partnership with the CARS program. NGRR selected CARS Vehicle Donations because their program is designed to support nonprofits of every size and shape. They have well-understood processes with 20 years of experience with vehicle donations.

#### Tell NGRR How to Use Your Donation

There are several ways you can direct NGRR to allocate your contribution. You may choose to spread your donation across all funds, or you may tell us to apply all of it to a specific cause.

#### General Fund

Contributions to this fund will pay for ordinary veterinary care and other expenses related to our Goldens in foster care. Any excess monies in this fund are allocated to NGRR's emergency reserve to help cover catastrophic events, such as earthquakes, fires and puppy mill raids, in communities throughout Northern California.

#### Senior Goldens

Contributions to this fund will be used exclusively to support the extra veterinary and foster care usually required for dogs eight years and older – our well-deserving Golden Oldies.

#### Special Needs Fund

Inspired by "Zack," a severely dysplastic Golden taken in and treated by NGRR, this fund was established to provide extensive veterinary care, surgery, and rehabilitation to young and deserving Goldens who are critically ill, deformed, and/or injured. These dogs need immediate access to funds to restore their quality of life – and, in extreme cases, to save their lives – without financially burdening their adoptive families.

#### For More Information

For further information, please consult with your financial planner or tax advisor. More information about donating to NGRR can be found on our website at www.ngrr.org.

## Volunteer Interest

I would like to learn more about volunteering for NORCAL Golden Retriever Rescue. I am particularly interested in the areas noted to the right. (Note: This information may also be submitted through our website at www.ngrr.org.)

#### Mail to:

NORCAL Golden Retriever Rescue 405 El Camino Real, Suite 420 Menlo Park, CA 94025-5240

#### HANDS-ON DOG WORK

- ☐ Area Coordinator
- ☐ Area Assistant
- ☐ Foster Care
  ☐ Home Visits
- ☐ Shelter Checks
- ☐ Phone Calls
- ☐ Transportation
- Marketing Outreach
- ☐ Store Merchandise
- ☐ Content for social media, newsletter & website

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NGRR is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) corporation under the		#77-0392584





NORCAL Golden Retriever Rescue, Inc. 405 El Camino Real, Suite 420 Menlo Park, CA 94025-5240

#### How to Contact NORCAL Golden Retriever Rescue

Facebook: NCGRR NGRR Cell #: (650) 665-0964 Mailing Address:

Instagram: norcalgoldenretrieverrescue Website: www.ngrr.org 405 El Camino Real, Suite 420 Menlo Park, CA 94025-5240

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Deborah Cole Linda Scheffel Karen Swanson
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# www.ngrr.org

Stay up-to-date on our website!

# The NGRR Store Is Open!



We continue to add Golden Goodies to our Store in addition to our beautiful 2021 NGRR calendar. The products we sell help support our mission to provide comprehensive veterinary care to the Goldens in our care!

www.ngrr.org/store

# Calling All Volunteers!

Would you like to get involved with NORCAL Golden Retriever Rescue? We are always looking for volunteers. Perhaps this newsletter will inspire you to help out. If so, please contact us at

info@ngrr.org