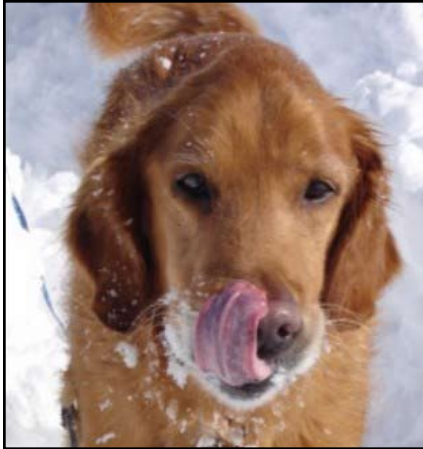


GRRoW's GOLDENTAILS



a closer look at GRRoW: transport



Libby

The Promise in a Trip

Max & Libby to Homeward Bound Golden Retriever Rescue & Sanctuary, Inc., Elverta, CA

Every dog's way into rescue begins the same – with a transport. And with it, comes promise. As we look into those big brown eyes we all know and love so well, we promise that we will do our best to find a perfect forever home. We promise those dogs that have been hurt, that they will never be hurt again. We promise those dogs that have been abandoned and missed meals, that we will not go hungry again. We promise those dogs that are misunderstood, that we will try our best to understand them and give them everything they need. As they climb into our vehicles, we offer them hope for a brand new life.

With Max and Libby, their journey was just a little bit longer than most.

Max and Libby both came into GRRoW under usual circumstances. Libby in January 2008. Max, initially came in March 2007, and then back again in September 2010. Libby had



Max

some medical issues and was uncomfortable with new situations. Max loved people so much that he became overly anxious and unfortunately destructive at times, when he was away from them.

Over time, it became obvious that in order to keep our promises to Max and Libby, we needed to ask some hard questions; to make some tough decisions. Suitable forever homes were just not surfacing. Within foster, did we have the capabilities to meet Max and Libby's needs? Although adored by their foster families, it was decided that an offer by Homeward Bound might just be the best we could offer to them. Thus, began the journey of a (couple) thousand miles.

I really first learned of Max and Libby in late November when I received the information that they had been accepted to Homeward Bound. As a new GRRoW volunteer and even newer transport coordinator, I was quite surprised by the request to arrange transport. To where? California! And I thought we only operated in Wisconsin. I started

Transport continued on page 8

Inside this issue:

Member Bios	3
What do the Results of Your Pet's Blood work Mean?	4
In Loving Memory	6
Success Stories	7
Perspectives on Pet Insurance	9
Acknowledgments	10
Volunteers Needed for Tails on Trails	11
Upcoming Events	12

Mission Statement

To encourage and promote responsible dog ownership and to reduce the abuse and neglect of all Golden Retrievers through rehabilitation and adoption.

To do all in our power to assure the humane treatment of Golden Retrievers and to accept unwanted Golden Retrievers, care for them medically, spay/neuter and rehabilitate them and place them in caring homes.

To educate the public in responsible dog ownership to include proper health, spay/neutering, nutrition, training and good canine citizenship.

To discourage unwanted or careless breeding practices and promote care for all dogs.

Golden Retriever Rescue of Wisconsin, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

www.grrow.org

message from our top dog *by Jan Sabella, GRRoW President*

Spring!! It's that miraculous time of year when the birds are returning, green sprouts can be seen shooting up from the earth, and the sun seems a bit warmer. The grills come out, baseball is in full swing, and the flower and plant catalogs are in the mail. Golden retrievers have their nose to the wind and along the ground to find the prizes which have been well hidden under snow for so many months.

Yes, Spring is wonderful in so many ways, but there are dangers for our Golden retrievers this time of year too.

Along with the birds and flowers fleas and ticks are back. So, it's time to remember to protect our dogs against the diseases these insects carry. Please be sure to use a quality flea and tick protector each month to keep your dog safe.

As beautiful and enjoyable as flowers and plants are they can be a danger to dogs.

Here is a list of some flowers and plants that may cause vomiting and diarrhea. Enjoy Spring and keep your Golden retrievers safe!

Hazardous plants

Castor Bean	Larkspur
Soap berry	Indian Tobacco
Ground Cherry	Indian Turnip
Skunk Cabbage	Poke Weed
Daffodil	Bittersweet Woody
Delphinium	Wisteria
Foxglove	

Attention New Adoptive Families & GRRoW Volunteers

NEW!!! Now when you adopt a dog from GRRoW, you will now get a gift of one month of Sheltercare pet insurance. The foster home will have this information with them at the time of adoption for you to look over and sign. If you do not want to continue the insurance (at a fee to you), it simply goes away.

ShelterCare provides \$750 of coverage per policy (\$75 deductible per policy) for:

Foreign Body Ingestion Removal
Motor Vehicle Accident
Lacerations
Insect Bites/Stings

Defined Poison Ingestion
Bone Fracture
Ear Illnesses
Eye Illnesses
Flea Allergy Dermatitis
Intestinal Parasites
Urinary Tract Infections

Upper Respiratory Tract Infections
Mange/Mites/Ringworm
Parvovirus/Feline Panleukopenia
Tick Borne Diseases
Heartworm Disease

Read more about pet insurance on page 9.

board of directors and coordinators

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Vice President Operations (13) – Carly Penn, grrowfc2@gmail.com
Vice President Administration (12) Wendy Strang, w_strang@yahoo.com
Treasurer (13) – Jody Starck, jostarck@yahoo.com
Secretary (12) – Deb Seline, dseline@frontiernet.net
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COMMITTEES/COORDINATORS/TEAMS

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Assessment Coordinator Assistant – Debbie Rice
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Web – Dog Updates – Andy Clark, Garry Denny
Web Support Volunteers – Nick Teifke, Erin Richason

Need more information about GRRoW?

Want to Foster?
Email: contact@grrow.org

Want to volunteer?
Email Kaysie at kaysieryan@centurytel.net

Fundraising?
fundraising@grrow.org

Need to surrender your Golden? surrender@grrow.org

Adopt? placement@grrow.org

member bios

Carly Penn

Vice President Operations

I first joined GRRoW a few years back when I had a friend that was interested in adopting a golden. In listening to all of the research she had done on GRRoW, it sounded like a great organization to be a part of. I started out as a placement team member working to match foster dogs with their forever homes. While working on that, the opportunity to become a Foster Coordinator presented itself and I ventured into the Foster Area. In addition to placement and fostering, I have done home visits, assessments, and foster home trainings. I enjoy being a part of the operations areas and watching dogs transform as they move through our organization. I have met many wonderful people over the past few years and look forward to meeting many more as the Vice President of Operations. GRRoW is truly fortunate to have such dedicated volunteers. Happy tails!

Debby Rice

Assessment Coordinator Assistant

I started doing Golden Retriever rescue when Wisconsin was still part of RAGOM. I have been with GRRoW since we spun off from RAGOM. I have been active in many aspects of the organization doing home visits, assessments, transport, fostering (my favorite part) and some meet and greets. I enjoy fostering the seniors and dogs with medical issues. I find it very fulfilling. As for my own Golden Retrievers, I have two. I adopted Daisy Mae 1.5 years ago. She was my first foster failure. She is still going strong at 14 years old. Briar is 13 years old and has endured being a test dog for many years. I have been working at the same child care center since 1992—LOVE IT!! In my off time I enjoy biking, cross country skiing, gardening/yard work, hiking, fishing, basically anything outside.

Wendy Strang

Vice President of Administration

I have been a volunteer with GRRoW for approximately 5 years. I have conducted numerous home visits, assessments and transports, as well as participated in various events and fund raisers. I held the position of Placement Coordinator for nearly two years. After taking some time off from GRRoW to dedicate to my family I am now re-kindling my passion for GRRoW by accepting the position of Vice President of Administration. I hope to bring my sales, marketing and public relations experience to this position as well as my compassion and dedication to insuring the safety and ethical treatment of Golden Retrievers.

In my personal life, I have been married for almost twenty three years and have a 17 year old daughter who is in her junior year of high school. I am also the pack leader of two senior Golden guys and two female cats.



coming soon!

Bark in the Park

Date: Saturday, June 18, 2011

Time: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Location: Western Waukesha County
Dog Training Club
W1314 Cedar Drive
Ixonia WI 53036

Food: Potluck Picnic
Details to follow

Cost: \$5.00 per person to cover
cost of building rental

Registration: Please register at
www.grrow.org

Questions: Contact Wendy Strang at
w_strang@yahoo.com

Events: Doggie games
Raffle Baskets
50/50 Raffle winner will be
drawn at this event
Lure Coursing (tentative)
Canine Good Citizen Testing
Golden Merchandise for Sale

**Look for the flyer in the mail.
CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU THERE!**

what do the results of your pet's blood work mean? by Dr. Julia Bates, DVM

Blood work can be very helpful to veterinarians in evaluating your pet's health status. It is also useful to monitor some chronic conditions. The different parameters evaluated in blood work can be suggestive of and consistent with numerous disease processes; therefore, it is important to understand the true interpretation should be performed in conjunction with what is going on with the patient at the time the blood samples were collected.

Here are answers to the most common questions that veterinarians get asked about blood work.

Q: If my pet is sick, why is his blood work normal?

A: A pet can have a serious disease but still have normal blood work. This means that the disease is not the result of a condition that we can detect on blood work and it may not be affecting blood parameters.

Q: Why can't you tell that my pet has cancer from his blood work?

A: Unless it is a cancer of the blood, like some type of leukemia, blood work is not useful in making a diagnosis, but may be helpful in evaluating involved body systems or effects of chemotherapy.

Q: Blood work was just performed a few months ago, why do you need to repeat it now that my pet is ill?

A: Blood work will tell us about the patient at the time the samples were collected, unfortunately, if the pet's condition has changed, it doesn't help us, however, it does provide us with a baseline, which can be very helpful.

Q: What is a Minimum Data Base?

A: A MDB is the three common tests that give us an overview of many body systems and includes a Complete Blood Count (CBC), chemistry profile, electrolytes and urinalysis. It is very good to have a MDB performed yearly in older pets, which provides a baseline if your pet ever gets sick, and aids in the early detection of disease.

Components of the MDB

The complete blood count (CBC) provides information about red blood cells and white blood cells; including the numbers of each as well as their size and shape.

Some of the parameters of a CBC

Hematocrit (HCT) is the percentage of red blood cells within the blood. A normal HCT is close to 50%. Decreased HCT indicates the presence of anemia; however, it doesn't tell us the cause of the anemia.

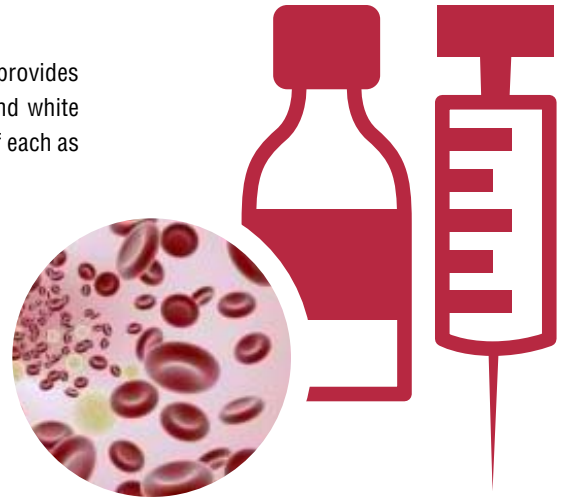
Elevation of HCT can be normal in some breeds of dogs, such as the Dachshund and Greyhound. It can also suggest dehydration, or if severely elevated suggests over production of red blood cells by the bone marrow.

Platelets are very important in the formation of blood clots. Decreased platelets can result from consumption (bleeding), destruction by the immune system and decreased production by the bone marrow. When platelets are severely decreased, it can lead to bruising and spontaneous bleeding.

Elevated platelet numbers are uncommon and may be due to chronic bleeding, splenic disease, chronic inflammation, or over production by the bone marrow.

White blood cell (WBC) count tells us the number of circulating white blood cells and is made up of many different types of white blood cells.

Neutrophils are a type of (WBC) important in fighting bacterial infections and are part of inflammation. Elevated neutrophils can be associated with an infection, or more likely may be associated with systemic inflammation or stress. Neutrophils can be artificially elevated secondary to the stress hormone cortisol, or administration of prednisone.



Decreased neutrophils may be due to a severe bacterial infection, decreased production by the bone marrow, or less commonly destruction by the immune system.

Components of a chemistry and electrolyte profile

Albumin is a large protein important in keeping fluid within blood vessels as well as transporting drugs and hormones.

Decreased albumin can be seen with blood loss, chronic inflammation, decreased production by the liver, increased loss from the GI tract, urinary tract, or through the skin. Increased albumin is an indication of dehydration

Alanine Aminotransferase (ALT) is an enzyme that lives within liver cells.

Elevated ALT indicates that an increased number of liver cells are being damaged or dying. Decreased has no real clinical significance

Alkaline Phosphatase (ALP) is an enzyme that lives on the surface of some liver cells, as well as cells lining the intestinal tract, in bones, kidneys and the placenta.

Elevation of ALP can be an indication of a problem with the liver or biliary tree, Cushing's disease or pancreatitis. It can be seen with rapid bone growth and with stress and administration of corticosteroids such



as prednisone. Decreased ALP is not typically a significant finding.

Cholesterol is an important building block for the structure of cells and is important in the formation of steroid hormones. Increased cholesterol can be an indication of liver disease, biliary disease, or hypothyroidism. It may also be elevated with conditions such as diabetes mellitus and Cushing's disease, or artificially elevated with administration of corticosteroids prednisone or stress.

Decreased cholesterol may be an indication of Addison's disease, gastrointestinal (GI) disease or liver disease.

Bilirubin is a product of the breakdown red blood cells. Elevation of bilirubin may be an indication of liver disease, biliary disease, pancreatitis, or secondary to the destruction of red blood cells.

Blood Urea Nitrogen (BUN) is a waste product from the breakdown of proteins and excreted through the kidneys. It is important for this value to be evaluated in conjunction with urine specific gravity.

Elevation of BUN can be associated with dehydration, kidney disease and GI bleeding. A decreased BUN can be an indication of liver dysfunction.

Creatinine is a product of muscle breakdown and it provides an estimation of glomerular filtration rate (kidney function). Creatinine should always be evaluated in conjunction with urine specific gravity.

Elevation of creatinine may be due primarily to dehydration and kidney disease. Decreased creatinine is not typically clinically significant.

Glucose is a sugar that provides energy to the cells of the body. Glucose can be elevated secondary to stress, excitement of diabetes mellitus.

Hypoglycemia (low blood glucose) may be an indication of liver failure, sepsis, some types of cancer, or Addison's disease.

Calcium is an electrolyte that is very tightly regulated; therefore, changes in calcium should be confirmed and investigated.

Hypercalcemia (elevated calcium) can be an indication of cancer, both benign (primary

hyperparathyroidism) and malignant (lymphoma and others). It can also be present in conjunction with Addison's disease and kidney disease. Hypocalcemia (low calcium) can be an indication of exposure to a toxin, kidney disease, and hypoparathyroidism.

Sodium (Na) is an electrolyte that is very important in maintaining fluid balance.

Hypernatremia can be associated with dehydration. Hyponatremia can be associated with vomiting, diarrhea, and Addison's disease.

Potassium (K) is an electrolyte that primarily lives within cells.

Hyperkalemia (elevated potassium) can be associated with increased platelets, Addison's disease, urinary obstruction and acute kidney failure. Significant elevation of potassium is an emergency, which can lead to sudden death. Mild hyperkalemia can be normal in certain breeds of dogs such as the Akita.

Hypokalemia (low potassium) can be associated with chronic kidney disease, vomiting, diarrhea, diabetes mellitus or an aldosterone secreting adrenal tumor.

The Urinalysis (UA)

Urinalysis is one of the most underutilized tests in veterinary medicine. It is very important when we are evaluating kidney function. The kidneys' job is to conserve water and to excrete excess water, as well as the elimination of waste products.

Important components of the UA

Specific gravity (SG) is an indication of how well the kidneys are concentrating the urine.

Increased SG suggest dehydration. Decreased SG is often seen in patients that are drinking excessively. Some conditions that can be associated with decreased SG are kidney disease, liver disease, Cushing's disease and diabetes insipidus.

Protein should not be present in your pet's urine. Some causes of protein in the urine include kidney disease, dehydration, fever, and cancer.

Glucose is a very important source of energy for the body and it does all it can to

conserve it. The kidneys actively transport glucose out of the urine. Glucose in the urine is most commonly associated with diabetes mellitus, however, it can also be seen with kidney damage or a disease called Fanconi Syndrome, which is more commonly seen in Besenji dogs.

White blood cells present in the urine are very suggestive of a urinary tract infection or inflammation within the bladder.

So, as you can see, abnormalities on blood work don't necessarily provide us with a diagnosis, rather they help us further localize the disease process or determine if your pet's illness is affecting other organ systems. Although we can look at blood work and obtain important information, interpretation of these results should occur in conjunction with history and physical examination. Therefore, I would encourage you to consult your veterinarian before attempting to interpret lab results on your own. ♥

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in loving memory...



Sunny



Sunny was adopted by the Kirchman Family from GRROW in March, 2002. She was my foster dog that turned into a family member. She was a blonde bombshell and a very outspoken one at that. Sunny had a voice/bark that always let you know she was around. She learned to use that voice to get popcorn, treats, a ride in the front seat of the car, or to remind us to pet her. Her favorite thing was to sit at the end of the couch curled up and snore. She lived to almost 15 years of age, and as her vet said, really passed due to old dog problems. Sunny and her outspoken personality will be missed by her sister Holly (another GRROW adoptee) and her mom.

Red



In November 2009, I adopted old man Red through GRRoW (09-095). He was only with me for 9 months but I wouldn't trade a day. He was the epitome of the gentle, solid, happy Golden.

He came to me after I lost a 14-year-old Labrador Retriever mix that had many health issues in his last years and having an easy dog in the house was a blessing. He was also great friends with Skylar and the cats who grieved for their buddy more than most beasts do.

Red's photo was taken at his 12th birthday party just a few days before he died from lymphoma.

Many adoptive and fosters-with-intent-to-adopt (FWITA) homes ask for young dogs. We always want more time. I suppose that's human nature. Red taught me time is so relative and most dogs, I believe, have no real concept of it. I was truly blessed to have had him even for a short time.

I know I helped make his last months fun and happy. He surely returned the favor.

They find us. And never truly leave.

Hemingway

In memory of Hemingway, here's a little story for all those who stand up for pets left behind.

On his walk to heaven, a man looked down and saw his dog walking beside him. A dog he loved with all his heart. A dog that had been dead for years. They came to a fine white marble and gold gate. He and his dog walked up to a man dressed in a fancy frock sitting at the entrance.

He asked, "Excuse me, where are we?"

"This is Heaven," the man answered.

"Can my friend come in, too?" the traveler asked.

The fancy man said, "I'm sorry, sir, but we don't accept pets."

The traveler turned back to the road and kept walking. At the top of the next hill, he came to an old farm gate with an old man leaning against a tree.

"Can I get some water for my dog?" asked the lost traveler.

"Sure, the pump is over there," answered the old man.

After a long drink, the traveler asked, "What do you call this place?"

"This is Heaven," answered the old man.

"Well, that's confusing," the traveler answered. "There was a man down the road standing at some pearly gates who said that was Heaven, too."

The old man smiled and said, "Nope. That's just the guy who takes in the folks who would leave their best friends behind. Come on in."

Sam



We were fortunate to have Sam in our lives from June of 2009 until March of 2011. He died of cancer of the mouth at 8.5 years old.

Sam came through Golden Rescue twice. He was tied outside 24/7 for part of his life and was adopted first by a wonderful family who had to return him due to a change in family situation. We took Sam first as a foster unaware that he really had no exposure to cats. Our cat, Grace, has no fear of big dogs and he wanted to eat her. She literally bored him into submission, as she refused to move. He'd go and nose her to try to get her up, but she was busy sleeping and would not move. He gave up and they ended up getting along just great.

Sam had great enthusiasm and interest in training classes. I took him to basic obedience and he was the oldest in the class. Every other dog was under one year and Sam was seven! He was a hit and most of

Memorials continued on page 7

Memorials continued from page 6

the other owners wanted to trade dogs! We then continued to agility. Sam had NO interest in the dog walk (like a balance beam) at the beginning, but I got him used to being off the ground at the park by using picnic tables. He caught on fast. Then we learned the "table" command and would practice that at the park. It was just great since even when he had a mouth full of tumors, he loved getting the "table" command and leaping up. We used it a few times to avoid obnoxious dogs too!

Every dog teaches the owners something and Sam taught us to be absolutely delighted every day. We miss him terribly.

Abby



Abby came into our lives in the fall of 1998. She was so little and so adorable! Her precociousness brought us loads of laughs and satisfaction. I'll never forget trying to take her for her first walk. As soon as I put the leash on her collar, she stopped walking. We did this for a few days and then one day, she found a stick. With that stick in her mouth, she seemed to forget the leash was attached and she took off walking!

She settled in so well after we moved to the country. She loved going for "walk-about" in her yard and sniffing anything. Our weekends were planned around which trails to hike off-leash and her favorite: camping! Whenever we opened the door to the camper, she was there! Oh, and usually on HER couch: she adopted that quickly... she was her Dad's shadow, hanging out with him while Mom slept a little later. This pooch, like most Golden Retrievers, loved just being with her family and doing whatever we were doing.

We were very fortunate when "her time" came last October. Abby went to doggie

success stories

by Sheri Marek

Susan



Hi Golden Friends! It's been 2½ years since GRRoW brought in a puppy mill girl named "Susan" (and her sister Trixi). You might remember their pictures on the B&W GRRoW brochure awhile back. They looked pretty sad! I wanted to send a quick update and some recent pictures of Susie since she has come quite a ways since October 2008. These girls came in extremely under socialized knowing nothing but each other and how to have litters of puppies in their 5 years of life. They weighed 97 pounds and had untreated thyroid issues.

Susie is now 7½ years old and weighs 71 pounds. We fostered then formally adopted her in June 2009. She remains shy in new environments and with new people but what a Golden she's become. She adores her stuffed animals and has taken to chasing a tennis ball to. She loves the water! We recently moved to a new part of the state where we look forward to meeting new friends and getting Susie exposed to even more of the world around us. She walks great on a leash and has a super nose.

There is so much I could share about her advancements and what she still struggles with today but I think it's easier to say she is loved, adored and seems like a happy Golden girl today. Hoping the pictures show this.

Also, Trixi was adopted to a fantastic family of 5 in January of 2009 and lives a very special (spoiled) life with them. She won the Golden lottery for sure!

daycare on Thursdays but as she started to slow down, we switched to Wednesday to give her more quiet time before and after weekends. She collapsed shortly after dropping her off on her first Wednesday. After a day of testing at Animal Emergency, we learned of her cancer and poor prognosis. We were able to take her home for a few more quality days before saying goodbye on Monday. Had she not been at daycare that Wednesday, she would have died alone at home. Abby's picture picture was taken that last weekend. The look on her face says "Mom and Dad, thank you for giving me the best Golden life." Thank you Abbers. We miss your smiling face! ♥



Lois Kurschner DVM
Paul King, DVM

130 S. Madison • Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

920.743.2628

Transport continued from page 1

working on options. I tried to gather as much information as I could so that we could alleviate the stress of the move for these guys. Air, rail and relay auto options were looked into. It really came down to someone having to make a long trip if we wanted to try to give these two the least stressful transport possible. I convinced my sister a long weekend trip to California in February would be a great undertaking for us.

I met Max and Libby on Thursday, February 17th, when Bob and Kelly delivered them to me in Sun Prairie. While they said their 'good byes' to the dogs, the strong love that each of them shared for their respective dog was clearly evident. It was very difficult for me to start the trip.

My sister, and co-pilot, joined the dogs and me in Black River Falls. By nightfall, we were in Minnesota and settling in for the transport.

Max, located in the center area of the van, took numerous opportunities to let us know he was enjoying the ride – at first anyway. By the end of the trip, all of us were done with riding in the van. As expected, Libby was as quiet as a church mouse in the rear portion of the van. We kept going, stopping only for potty breaks and meals and continuing throughout the nights. Libby took to me better so I was responsible for her potty breaks and my sister got to know Max better. I cannot believe how much we fell in love with these two in just two days.

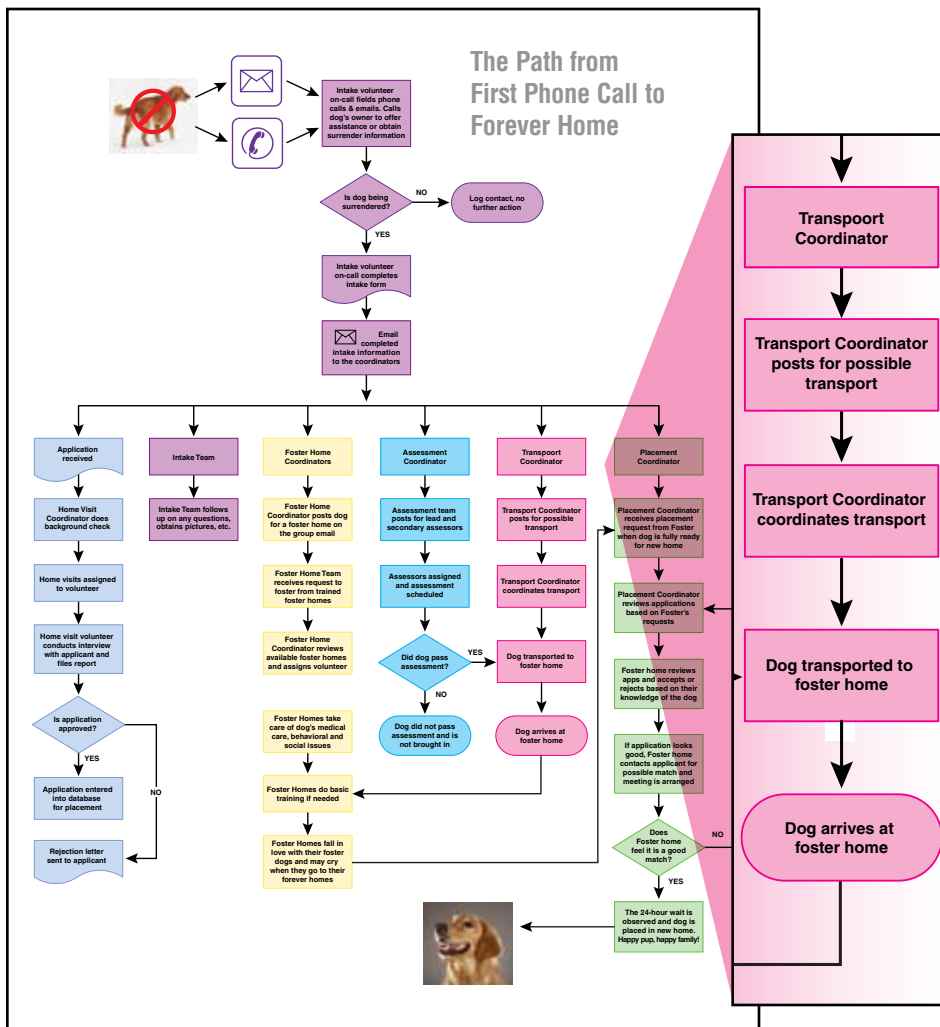
There were really only two very memorable stops. Otherwise, we played ball or walked alongside the road at truck stops to give the dogs a break from the trip; always focused on making our Saturday arrival goal at Homeward Bound. We stopped at Independence Rock in Wyoming. It is an impressively huge rock formation with a trail from the rest stop out to and around the

rock. We spent some time allowing the dogs to stretch their legs there. We also stopped at a park just inside of the California border. It was especially important to me to give our Wisconsin dogs one more chance to play in the snow. Wow! California has plenty of snow and when we left the snow, it didn't take us long to get to Homeward Bound so hopefully they will get to play in it again.

When we arrived at Homeward Bound, a volunteer greeted us and soon the staff was very efficiently ushering Max into the small building they use as a vet clinic while I worked hard to convince Libby to come out of the van. The small hot dogs that had worked throughout the trip were not working now as she surveyed this incredibly new situation. They checked both dogs over and were very attentive to the paperwork. It proved that it wasn't the first time they've completed this type of intake task. Way too soon the dogs were taken away and we were offered a tour. The facility was well designed and full of dogs waiting for a new home or settled into sanctuary. They had some recent wet weather so they were battling with muddy paws and muddy shoes making messes all over. We witnessed a team giving a dog a bath in their dog washing area. Not many dogs were out playing in the fields filled with puddles. It started hailing and the rest of the dogs went inside. We had arrived near the end of a day filled with many people visiting to meet potential dogs to adopt.

It was hard to start the journey home. Saying good-bye to two incredibly sweet dogs, especially knowing how much so many volunteers who interacted with them loved them, was hands-down the hardest part of the trip. The 4,000+ miles were nothing. The long hours stuck in off-tourist-season Wall Drug, SD due to weather closing down the interstate on our way home were nothing. The snow showers in the mountains, the long stretches of nothingness (ever heard of Muddy Gap, WY?), the endless stops at convenience stores with nothing enticing to eat, again were nothing.

Sometimes just letting them go onto that brand new life with all its promise, is the hard part about transport. ♥



persepective on pet insurance *by Donna S. Baker*

Reprinted with permission by Donna S. Baker, Adoption Manager/Newsletter Editor, Delaware Valley Golden Retriever Rescue

With the continued economic downturn, DVGRR (like many other rescue groups) has seen an increase in dogs surrendered because they developed an expensive medical problem that their original families could not afford to treat. It's heartbreaking to see a family give up a beloved pet due to financial constraints. We try to counsel them on other options, but many times there are none. I often wonder what would have happened if these families had taken out pet insurance on their dogs – would they have been able to keep them rather than surrender to rescue? Though not a panacea, insurance can be that “ace in the hole” that makes a huge difference should an unexpected health crisis occur.

I've learned the hard way myself how costly veterinary care can be. I ran up some hefty bills for my first two adopted Golden Retrievers, both senior dogs, back in the late 1990s. I was still paying off the cost of holistic treatments for both of them (acupuncture, Chinese herbs, etc.) when I adopted Tyler #4 in 2001. She was an 8-year-old in reasonably good health and it never crossed my mind to think about getting insurance on her. Bad move! My sweet Tyler girl lived to age 14.5, and over those six years she and I dealt with bladder problems, hip dysplasia, arthritis, severe inflammatory bowel disease, megaesophagus secondary to myasthenia gravis, a cancerous tumor on her leg, and thrombocytopenia (a dangerously low platelet count). She was hospitalized in critical care at least three times, needed extensive diagnostic testing over the years, had surgery twice...you get the picture.

With the help of a wonderful vet and my ever-present VISA card, Tyler pulled through everything but the thrombocytopenia, which ultimately was more than she could fight. I adored her, loved her to pieces, and would have done anything she needed. Fortunately, I am single with no human dependents and no one to squabble with about financial priorities, so I just kept handing over my credit card and going into big-time debt. Several months after

Tyler passed away in 2007, I sold my condominium in West Chester to move to Lancaster County and paid off her medical bills with proceeds from the sale. In that respect, I was lucky. Had I been foresighted enough to get pet insurance on Tyler in the beginning, I would have been even luckier and probably saved in the neighborhood of \$12,000.

I adopted Morgan, age 9.5, a week after I lost Tyler. I had no emotional reservations about adopting another older dog, but I sure had financial reservations! I told him he was not going to set foot in a vet office until I had pet insurance on him, and I kept my word. I researched available policies (not many companies will insure a senior dog, but I did find at least two) and signed him up pronto. Because of his age, his premiums are higher than average (about \$60 a month), but to me it brings tremendous peace of mind. I've submitted several claims in the last three years and received back 80% of the covered expenses. Just a few months ago I received \$500 back for costs related to a badly infected ear hematoma that required multiple vet visits, including one to an emergency clinic. Most importantly, should my Morgie-man develop an acute or very serious medical problem requiring expensive care, I'll be in a far better position to get him what he needs without running up that awful, anxiety-provoking debt again.

From my own experience and from that of seeing more and more Golden Retrievers given up because of high-priced medical problems, I've become a strong advocate of pet insurance. If you insure your healthy dog or cat, your premiums are likely to be quite reasonable and, in my opinion, well worth it to know you are covered in an emergency. But, you have to do your homework and be sure you purchase from a reputable, well-run company that will meet your needs. Like many other aspects of the pet care industry, insurance companies have proliferated greatly in the past decade or so and there are dozens to choose from.

A website that I like for comparing coverage and costs from different companies (plus reading reviews from their customers) is

www.petinsurancereview.com. Also on that site is this very helpful list of “Top Things to Know” about pet insurance:

1. Insurers differ

All pet insurance is not the same. Some insurance plans cover accidents to your pet, but not illnesses. Some plans cover treatment for cancer, some don't. It can be confusing, so you will need to do some research.

2. Don't just look at the price

A low price is no bargain if your insurance company denies your pet's claim. Cheaper policies tend to provide less coverage. Will the cheapest pet policy cover your dog's cancer treatment? Probably not.

3. You can use any veterinarian you want

Not sure if your existing vet takes pet insurance? Don't worry, this is not an issue. All pet insurance companies will allow claims from any licensed veterinarian.

4. You have to pay the veterinary bill out of your own pocket

With human health insurance, your doctor invoices your insurance company and you may never even see the bill. However, with pet insurance, you have to pay your veterinary bill and then submit your claim to your insurance company for reimbursement. (This is because pet insurance is considered a form of property insurance.)

5. Pre-existing conditions are not covered

Not ever. Think of it this way: if you got into a car accident and then tried to buy auto insurance the next day, do you think it would be fair to expect the insurance company to pay for your accident? Me neither.

6. Is pet insurance worth it?

Pet insurance protects you from large, unexpected vet bills. If you are the type of owner who does not want to choose between going into debt or putting your pet down, pet insurance is for you.

Insurance continued on page 11

Acknowledgments

for the months of January through March 2011. Thanks for all you do!

volunteer recognition

New Volunteers Welcome!!

Bill Scholz
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Though we try to list all contributors, inevitably we may miss a few. If we've missed your name, we apologize. Please email us, and we'll get it in the next newsletter.



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volunteers needed for "tails on trails"

GRRROW "Tails on Trails" group needs you to help with our annual fall dog walk. You may be asking yourself what I can do. LOTS! We are in need of Donations, raffle baskets items, gift cards and people pounding the pavement promoting the walk. Volunteer a portion of your time and make a big difference. Remember the amount of work diminishes when shared, so step up and give something we all have: TIME.

We are looking for people to help with the following positions:

RAFFLE CO-CHAIR: Help with collecting raffle items, organizing in baskets and with the raffle on the day of the walk.

SET-UP CHAIR: Must be able to be at the walk site at 7-8am the day of the walk. This person is responsible for getting the trail set-up, helping with tents and putting watering hole buckets and signs.

TRAIL CLEAN-UP CHAIR: Walking the trail after the walk and collecting watering hole buckets and trash.

This group will also need lots of helpers; the task will go faster with more hands.

SITE CLEAN-UP CHAIR: Helping with pack-

ing up tents, cleaning the group site and making sure we leave the area in a clean organized fashion.

This group will also need lots of helpers; the task will go faster with more hands.

DEMONSTRATION CHAIR: Contacting 2-3 groups, persons or businesses to put on demonstrations the day of the walk. This is where you get to be creative! Would you like someone to do a mock CGC test or Therapy test? How about contacting another rescue and asking to have them demonstrate something unique about the breed?

FOOD TENT VOLUNTEERS: We need helpers for the food tent. You will be asked to help customers with their orders, finish cooking food, set-up and clean-up.

Volunteers are needed for all positions to help give breaks to the workers.

Please contact me at the below information if you are able to help or want to attend this annual event.

Kelly White, Dog Walk Coordinator
Phone 608-220-5324
Email lucygoose38@yahoo.com



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adoptions

R is a Return GRRoW dog
SN is a Special Needs dog

Name	ID	Adopted By
JANUARY		
Cab	10-078	The K Family
Charlee	10-084	The D Family
Piper	10-068	The F Family
Riley #2	10-077	The E Family
Sawyer	10-054	The B Family
Teddy	10-079	The K Family
Tina	10-090	The B Family
FEBRUARY		
Chauncy	11-011	The M Family
Mr Bucket	10-073	The W Family
Piper #2	10-080	The S Family
MARCH		
Benny	10-081	The S Family
Chief	10-085	The C Family
Jesse	11-005	The B Family
Muffy	10-089SN	The S Family
Murphy	11-006	The S Family
Odie	11-002R	The S Family
Oso	11-001R	The S Family
Sage	10-075	The D Family

Insurance continued from page 9

A Note from Donna: This article was originally written on October 17 and intended for our last issue, but was cut for space. Less than three weeks after I wrote it, Morgan unexpectedly developed that "acute or very serious medical problem" that I referenced in the article but never thought would happen so soon. After a sudden collapse, he was diagnosed with a tumor on his heart (hemangiosarcoma) and passed away on November.

Medical expenses for the diagnostic services and emergency treatment he received exceeded \$2500 in just two days. Having insurance on him didn't save my precious Morgie, but it certainly helped me get him the best care possible under the circumstances. (I received back \$1900 of those expenses.) And yes, I will be getting insurance on 11-year-old Alli, my newest adoptee! ♥



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and leave a message.

Need to surrender your Golden? Email surrender@grow.org
Adopt? placement@grow.org

You are my Sunshine! GRRoW's Sunshine!

Do you know of a GRRoW volunteer's birthday, anniversary?
Did a volunteer just have a baby? Relative or dog pass away?
Contact Kathy Anderson, our Sunshine Coordinator, at kathy.ann.anderson@gmail.com and she will be happy to send them some "sunshine" from their friends at GRRoW. Donations of blank thank-you notes, stamps and greeting cards are appreciated.

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