Golden Retriever Rescue Education and Training

GRREAT Foster Homes

Winter 2012 Edition | GRREAT Beginnings | www.GRREAT.org/fosters

Rocky 05-200

Saturday, January 5, 2013
12pm-2pm
Adoption Day - PetCo
Ellicott City, MD

Saturday, January 26, 2013
12pm-2pm
GRREAT Annual Meeting & Elections
Chevy Chase, MD

Saturday, February 2, 2013
12pm - 2pm
Adoption Day - PetCo
Vienna, VA

GRREAT's Heart & Soul

by Mary Collings - Intake & Foster Home Coordinator

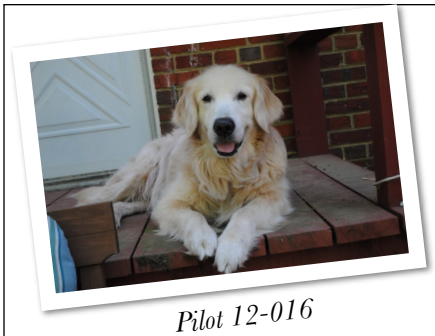
Milo 07-047

From all of us on the GRREAT Foster Home Team, we wish you and your families a wonderful and safe holiday season. Thank you for everything you've done over the past year to help Goldens in need. Some of the dogs we've brought in this year had some serious medical issues and we also brought in some dogs with behavior issues who very much needed training. Thanks to you, these dogs had safe and loving foster homes to go to. You are the heart and soul of this rescue and without you, we would not be able to help so many Goldens every single year.

GRREAT Membership Renewal

Don't miss a thing! Renew your GRREAT membership for 2013!

We are dependent on membership dues, donations, and fundraising to operate. Your $40 membership dues keeps the GRREAT News coming every two months and will help save more Goldens in 2013. If you elect to "opt-out" of receiving the newsletter by mail, the $40 is fully tax deductible. If you choose to receive the printed newsletter, $30 is tax deductible ($10 is the value of goods and services received). Membership also confers one vote in GRREAT elections.



Pilot 12-016

Museco 12-011

Seagrams 12-023

Goldens Rising!!

by Lucinda Twining, GRREAT Medical Coordinator

Every year about this time we read warnings and tips for keeping dogs safe during the holidays. Most of us know that chocolate, raisins and grapes, onions, and even coffee and macadamia nuts are dangerous for dogs; but for this article I want to focus on two dangers that you may not be aware of – Xylitol and yeast dough.

Xylitol is a sweetener found in many varieties of candy, gum, and baked goods; as well as other products. Now, look deeply into your dog's and/or foster dog's eyes and consider that during the holidays, candy and baked goods are often left out for friends and family to enjoy and a guest may leave a package of sugarless gum or a piece of candy laying within a dog's reach. Can you be 100% sure that those little golden angels, whose eyes you are currently gazing into, will not help themselves to these sweet temptations, even if they are knocked on to the floor right in front of them and you are not right there to tell them to "leave it"? So what will happen if Gracie or Hank manages to steal a pack of sugarless gum out of Aunt Sally's purse? Early symptoms of Xylitol poisoning may include vomiting and the dog acting lethargic. You may also notice a loss of coordination. These symptoms can then progress to seizures and the dog being unable to get up on its own. Finally, the liver enzymes will rise and liver failure can occur within a few days.

Jinx 12-005

Will you or a family member be doing any baking over the holidays? Raw dough containing yeast is a two-fold problem. The first problem is that the warm environment of the stomach acts like a warm oven and encourages the dough to continue rising. This can result in a bowel obstruction or a bloated/distended stomach. The stomach may then twist, leading to a GDV (gastric dilatation and volvulus). This is a life-threatening situation that requires emergency abdominal surgery before the walls of the stomach die due to poor blood supply. The second issue comes as the yeast ferments in the stomach; it releases alcohol which may lead to alcohol poisoning. This Thanksgiving holiday, one of our GRREAT foster dogs managed to gobble (pun intended ☺) down 8 yeast rolls that were covered and rising far back on the counter. Luckily, the foster mom recognized that is a serious issue and called to get approval to take the dog to the emergency vet right away. Because of the foster mom's quick actions, the ER vet was able to induce vomiting and the dog is just fine.

So, as you and those you hold dear gather to celebrate the holidays, remember that at this is the time of year when our lives are busy and we are distracted by all the events going on around us, even the best of dogs can be tempted to sample an unexpected treat. If you think your foster dog has eaten something potentially hazardous, please call Lucinda Twining, GRREAT Medical Coordinator, at 703-754-4379 or on her cell phone at 703-973-9696. If you cannot reach her, you can call Mary Collings, GRREAT Intake/Foster Home Coordinator, at 540-720-8588.

Happy holidays to all and to all, may your dogs have a good night!!

Lexie 12-083

How to Help Your Anxious Foster Dog

by Mary Collings, Intake/Foster Home Coordinator

It's probably a safe bet that at some point in your fostering experiences, you're going to have a foster dog who is anxious, fearful, or stressed out from the changes in his/her life. Here are some suggestions that might just do the trick to help calm your foster dog's nerves.

Lavender Essential Oil

You can buy it at any store that sells aromatherapy products and most health food stores also carry this product. Put a small amount of lavender oil in your hands and rub your hands together and then "fluff it" through the dog's coat, on the top of the head, and on the tips of the ears. Lavender oil is known for its calming properties and really can "chill out" a dog. You can reapply it as often as you like and your dog will smell really good, too! We do carry lavender oil in our GRREAT supplies, so if you can wait a couple of days to receive it in the mail, you can request it by emailing Denise at supplies@grreat.org.

Harp Music

There was a trial done with dogs who are fearful or who have anxiety and 87% of the dogs in the trial were completely calmed down by listening to harp music. It has something to do with the chords and their vibration. We carry a CD of harp music in our supplies; however, once your foster dog is adopted, you'll need to return the CD to GRREAT supplies.

Thunder Shirt

Many animal hospitals carry Thunder Shirts and they can also be purchased from Amazon.com. The price generally runs $39.95 and many people have had great success with these shirts. The company offers a money-back guarantee if it doesn't work. They're useful for dogs who are scared of storms, dogs who have behavior problems, and dogs who feel anxious. If your foster dog has severe anxiety problems, please let me know and we can talk about having GRREAT pay for a Thunder Shirt. When your foster is adopted and if you feel that the Thunder Shirt should go along with the dog, you will need to ask the adopter to add the cost of the Thunder Shirt to the adoption fee.

Melatonin

You're probably familiar with this because people take it to help them fall asleep at night. Melatonin can work wonders on some dogs with anxiety issues. I have personally used this on my dogs with very good results. I buy the 3 mg tablets that have the fewest ingredients added. Most dogs, including my own, don't get the least bit sleepy or groggy on this and it definitely calms them down during storms. **Please do not give Melatonin to your foster dog without first consulting with your GRREAT vet, to ensure that your vet feels it's safe for your foster!! Also, your vet can advise you on proper dosage for your foster dog.**

Rescue Remedy

You can buy this at any health food store and at PetCo, too. You can put several drops of this in the water bowl and/or a drop or two in the dog's mouth. We carry similar products in our GRREAT supplies, so email Denise if you'd like to try this.

DAP Collar & Diffuser

These things used alone or together work well on alot of dogs. The collar and diffuser contain what's called a Dog Appeasing Pheramone, which is the same pheramone a Mother dog gives off to her puppies and it has a calming effect on most dogs. You plug the diffuser into a wall socket and put the collar on the dog (it's similar looking to a flea collar). We also carry these items in our GRREAT supplies. Rescue Remedy You can buy this at any health food store and at PetCo, too. You can put several drops of this in the water bowl and/or a drop or two in the dog's mouth. We carry similar products in our GRREAT supplies, so email Denise if you'd like to try this.

MICROCHIPPING: PREVENTING PERPLEXING PURLOINED POOCH PREDICAMENTS

by Robert Moore, GRREAT Education Coordinator

Ever experience a lost, stolen, dog? I almost did and, believe me, it's a traumatic encounter with heartbreak!

Our first Golden, Jud, approaching fifteen in 2003, had developed distal sensorimotor polyneuropathy, resulting in substantially diminished use of his rear legs. He was as always with us Sunday morning when we had to vacate our beach house to make room for renters moving in at ten.

Around eight I carried Jud out, gently laying him in the edge of the garage where he could lounge, thirty yards from the road, and enjoy the autumn breeze while watching bicyclists and other infrequent passersby. Lucy and Golden brother Grady were in the house packing for the trip, door open with a view of Jud, while I drove to the nearby drug store for Jud's Selsun Blue bath solution.

Ten minutes later I returned to an empty spot where Jud had been! Assuming Lucy had brought him in, I was stunned when she assured me, "no, I just checked and he was relaxing there in the breeze!"

Panic time! I searched the yard and adjacent woods while Lucy ran up and down the road, calling him. After twenty minutes our emotions were spinning out of control – Jud wasn't ambulatory, so how could he have gone missing so suddenly? Amidst our weeping and wailing a green Volvo pulled up, loaded with Jud, and profuse apologies for "rescuing" what Anne, the driver, had taken upon herself to assume was an abandoned, mature dog! We were too overjoyed to inquire why the open door wasn't a clue!

Notwithstanding the happy ending I don't enjoy telling that story as it brings back the sheer terror we felt. It is, however, a lesson we shall never forget!

MICROCHIPPING
What is it?

According to ASPCA statistics approximately 5 to 7 million pets enter animal shelters nationwide every year, about half picked up as strays, of which approximately 3 to 4 million are euthanized (representing 60 percent of the dogs and 70 percent of the cats). According to the National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy (NCPPSP), less than 2 percent of cats and only 15 to 20 percent of dogs are eventually returned to their owners! The overwhelming majority of these fortunate ones are identified by tags, tattoos or microchips. Even though microchips are not tracking devices, and must be scanned, the chances of finding a lost pet are substantially increased by their use.

The process involves placing by needle a tiny chip about the size of a grain of rice containing a unique identification, under the dog's skin, usually between the shoulder blades. The procedure takes a few seconds, the time it takes to give any injection. Any pain is negligible; it's like drawing blood.

The cost is minimal. At the vet it may be around $50.00. GRREAT does microchipping for its dogs free of charge.

Some studies have found rare instances of tumors developing at the site of the microchip. This is extraordinarily uncommon, especially considering the millions of microchips implanted in the many animal species that are regularly micro chipped. We're talking about microchipping, for example, cockatiels and other parrots, horses, llamas, alpacas, goats, sheep, miniature pigs, rabbits, deer, ferrets, penguins, snakes, lizards, alligators, turtles, toads, frogs, rare fish, chimpanzees, mice, and prairie dogs—even whales and elephants. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service uses microchipping in its research of wild bison, black-footed ferrets, grizzly bears, elk, white-tailed deer, giant land tortoises and armadillos.

Animal shelters, kennels, breeders, trainers, registries, rescue groups, humane societies, clinics, farms, stables, animal clubs and associations and most any entity associated with animals routinely microchip. These folks also scan for microchips to return lost pets quickly to their owners, avoiding expenses for housing, food, medical care, outplacing, as well as euthanasia. Many shelters and rescues place chips in all outplaced animals.

GRREAT began microchipping its dogs in 2004 after determining that tattooing is no longer the best option for identification. GRREAT has partnered with AVID (American Veterinary Identification Devices) Identification Systems as its microchip provider of choice. AVID has proven to be more user friendly with a much lower fee structure for rescues than their competitors. Being the leading provider of microchips in the industry, they provide the strongest database of its kind.

All GRREAT dogs that were not previously tattooed are required by contract to be microchipped. If you would like to microchip your previously tattooed GRREAT dog, there is a $25 fee. Micro chipping is also available to all non-GRREAT dogs at a fee of $35.

Microchipping is available at GRREAT Adoption Day events, GRREAT special functions, and specially scheduled microchip clinics throughout our service area. You should contact Jeff Twining, GRREAT Microchip Coordinator, microchips@grreat.org, for more information.

Please make certain any dog you foster is microchipped!

Canine First-Aid

by Skye Anderson

Do you know what to do if your dog bloats? Can you do cardio-pulmonary resusciation on him or bandage a cut paw? What is first aid, anyway?

The American Red Cross offers a course in dog first aid - the immediate, temporary care of a sick or injured animal until he can be transported to a veterinarian - without injuring yourself or causing further injury to the pet. *Immediate* so as to not let his condition worsen. *Temporary* because the pet should then be seen by a vet even if he seems to have recovered from the choking incident, e.g., because there may be damage to his windpipe (trachea). *Without injuring either yourself* (what good could you do if you were bitten?) or *further harming the animal* (remember, first do no harm).

What is Normal?

To be able to determine if our pet is sick, we must first know what is normal. What is his usual TPR (temperature, pulse, respiration)?

T is for Temperature

A dog's *temperature* is higher than ours: from 100.2 - 102.8F. Anything over 104 or under 100 should be considered an emergency. Ask your vet to teach you how to take your dog's temperature.

P is for Pulse (heart rate)

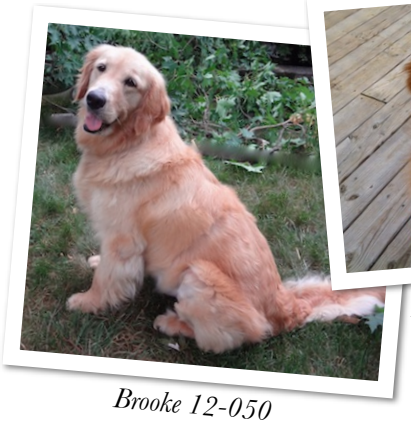
You can take your dog's pulse (heart rate) by placing him on his right side. Bend his left leg, place 2 or 3 fingers on his rib cage where the elbow touches his chest (about the 5th rib) and start counting. (Don't use your thumb because it has a pulse of its own.) The pulse may be more difficult to find on older or obese dogs (another good reason for dieting!). If you are still having trouble, try the inner thigh (femoral vessel) or just below the wrist or ankle. For a dog weighing less than 30 pounds, the average pulse lies between 100 and 160. For dogs over 30 pounds, the range is 60-100 and for puppies, it is 120-150. Be advised that it is not unusual for the pulse to speed up or slow down in dogs.

R is for Respiration (breathing rate)

The respiration rate (rate of breathing) is generally 10-30 breaths per minute though a dog may pant up to 200 pants per minute.

Get to know your dog! You'll love it and he will love you even more for it. Remember, he depends on you - for love, companionship, exercise and even for his health.

Skye Anderson is a volunteer instructor of Pet First Aid classes for the American Red Cross in central Maryland, www.redcross-cmd.org. She can be reached at skyebird48@hotmail.com.



Brooke 12-050

Faeden 12-077

Bandit 12-022

Angel 11-196