

2009

GRREAT FOSTER HOMES

GRREAT Beginnings Lead to Happy Endings



Rock 07-154 & Sandy 02-142 on the Mall
by Will Buklad

SPRING SHOWERS BRING GOLDEN ALLERGIES

BY ERIN LEDBETTER

There are three main categories of allergies for our canine friends: airborne allergens such as pollens, flea allergies and food allergies.

SPRING ALLERGIES CAN AFFECT DOGS TOO

As spring comes upon us once again, the allergens and pollutants are sure to follow closely behind. We are not alone in our springtime allergies, our canine companions can suffer right along with us. Of course pollen is only one allergen we have to be wary of to keep our Goldens healthy. Luckily, GRREAT has a vet who specializes in the treatment of allergies if you think your foster dog is in need.



Airborne allergens like pollens from grasses, trees and blooming plants are typically seasonal. You will want to watch for sneezing, red eyes, itchy skin and hair loss, usually toward the front of the dog's body on the head, neck, ears and paws.



When fleas bite our dogs, they leave a small amount of saliva in your dogs body.

More sensitive dogs can react to this with itchy, irritated skin, typically on the rear portion of the body, above the base of the tail. Please make sure you keep your foster dogs flea free. GRREAT supplies foster homes with Frontline Plus and you are welcome to also use organic, natural flea repellents as well.



Allergies to food can exhibit the same itchy skin and hair loss on the front part of your dog's body. You'll notice that these allergies stick around even when the pollen has passed us by. Pet food allergens are often corn, wheat, beef and chicken. Other proteins like fish, venison, duck and buffalo can be safer proteins if your dog experiences these allergies.



CHECK THE GRREAT CALENDAR FOR MORE EVENTS

Spring Events

April 4

Adoption Day

Petco - Alexandria
6612 Richmond Highway
Alexandria, VA
Noon - 2PM

April 24

Canines & Cocktails for a Cause

Lowes Annapolis Hotel
126 West Street
Annapolis, MD
5pm - 8pm

May 2

Adoption Day

Petco - Annapolis
2319-D Forest Dr.
Annapolis, MD
Noon - 2PM

June 6

Adoption Day

Petco - Herndon
2441-F Centreville Road
Herndon, VA
Noon - 2PM

June 13

Annual Bark-B-Que

Quiet Waters Park
600 Quiet Waters Park Rd.
Annapolis, MD
11am-3pm



GABE'S STORY

BY NANCY FOREST

Before Gabe (B.G.) the fosters who had graced our home were given up because their owners had a change of circumstances. Our first foster had been tied up outside 24/7 because he was left in the care of his owner's parents, who already had three dogs, and did not want another. Our second foster came to us because her owner had a change of financial circumstances, and had to move to an apartment that didn't allow dogs. One of the sweet fosters who followed was abandoned at a shelter, but more typically owners gave up their dogs because they didn't have the financial means or the time to care for the dogs.

Mary called me in late June 2007 to see if we would foster an 8½ years old golden who was being given up because of his fear of thunder and other loud noises. The deadline was July 2, because the owners did not want to have the dog with them when the 4th of July hullabaloo began. Mary was



concerned because the give up owners seemed extremely stressed and very anxious to have the dog out of their house.

Not knowing what I would find, off I went to pick up Gabe 07-110. I was sure I had misunderstood the owner's directions, because I found myself turning into the driveway of a beautiful, charming home

located in a very desirable part of town.

I was met by the owners and taken on an extensive tour of the house so that they could show me all the doors, woodwork, furniture and even fencing that Gabe had destroyed when he was left alone during a thunderstorm. He had indeed done extensive damage to the lovely old home. His owners provided me with a variety of "doggie downers" that had been prescribed by Gabe's vet, none of which had any effect on his fear and destructiveness. Gabe jumped in the car with me, happy to be going for a ride, and left the only home he had known for nearly nine years. It wasn't clear to me if our home would be next on the list to be dismantled, but because either
(continued on page 3)

ADIRONDACK BUTT RUBS

BY JOHN MCGOWAN

Several years ago, our first dog, Nop, began to lose use of his back legs. At first, I could not believe it, but when I could no longer deny it, I wanted to believe, that it was only temporary. Eventually his back legs would collapse during a walk around the block and he would try to drag himself using his front legs. Many dog owners know the heartache of seeing their beloved pet get old. We took him to a therapeutic vet nearby for evaluation who suggested water therapy, massage, acupuncture, and supplements. When I asked for the best way to make his legs better, she said that he was past the repair stage and all we could do was make him more comfortable. I was not ready to believe it. Nop lasted another year, his final trip was a 10 day canoe trip in the Adirondacks. He traveled easily with us by car, trail, backpacking, and now by canoe. While we were resting after a long day, lying in the sun, I saw Nop looking sore, struggling to his feet and limp around sniffing and doing regular dog stuff. I remembered what the vet had said about a massage that caused the dogs to

push back helping to strengthen his legs and ease his discomfort. The "Adirondack Butt Rub" was born.

When the dog is standing, I massage them on their back near the base of the spine. I use my fingertips with my hand shaped like a claw or the heel of my palm (see picture). I would move back and forth and push down. I would push hard enough to feel them resist but not so hard as to push them down. If they're too weak for that, I would massage the thighs. Again, I would push them left and then right. Not hard enough to push them over but hard enough that they would have to resist. If the dog is too weak, I would brace them on one side with my leg or hand.

Almost two years ago, we adopted Tillie. She spent many years on a concrete slab. She was overweight and unsteady on her feet. She had trouble on stairs and appeared to be pretty much blind and deaf. I started the butt rubs right away. Everytime she went out or I caught her on her feet, she would get a treatment. It took a few months for her to lose the extra weight, and less time before she would run a few steps when our other dogs would start barking at a neighbor's dog. Within a year, she could gallop across our yard, jump up on our bed, and go up and down carpeted stairs without hesitation or trouble. Just today, we got a new foster. He has weak back legs.



Gomer 09-032

"Does not do well on stairs" we were told. I started the good ol' reliable rub immediately. Told him it had a proven track record. Tillie is living proof that I could make him strong again if he worked with me. It will make a "Stair Master" out of him. He is a Golden Retriever, bred to work with humans. He did the stairs, up and down. He does not give up and neither will I.

P.S. I am neither a vet, a therapist nor a writer. The closest thing I have to credentials is a license to work on Air Conditioners. I love my dogs and want them to have a good life. Anything that makes them feel better is worth a try and the Adirondack Butt Rub works for me.

“She was such a perfect match for Gabe, I had to let him go...”



(Gabe's Story continued from page 2)

my husband or I are nearly always at home, I thought we had a chance to help Gabe. Little did I know how much of my heart Gabe would claim.

Gabe is one of those golden retrievers who looks very aristocratic. His features are refined, with a lovely white muzzle surrounding eyes that have experienced great fear and sadness and that beg for safety from the big world's loud bangs and pops that intrude unpredictably into his life. His body is agile and beautifully proportioned, belying his age.

As if his eyes didn't completely charm me, Gabe would put his head down between my knees to be rubbed, nudging me each time my hand stopped stroking his beautiful head. And then there was the matter of his manners: never before or since has a foster dog been so completely obedient and endearing. My three year old grandson could walk him on a leash, and Gabe would walk absolutely quietly and slow his gait to stay by William's side. He even had a good influence on our "permanent" dog, Huston, who seemed to pull much less on a leash in the company of Gabe.

When July 4th came, as expected, Gabe became fearful and anxious, pacing from room to room and trembling with fear as each of the seemingly endless fireworks exploded. With the advice and help of my POC, Lucinda, we tried everything we knew. He didn't want to be in a small space away from the windows, nor did he want to be in a crate. Unfortunately, Huston's calm manner during the fireworks didn't seem to comfort Gabe at all. Gabe and I finally got through the trauma by lying on the floor together, with my arms wrapped tightly around him crooning in his ear until the terrible noise was over.

By the time we advertised Gabe's availability for adoption, the routine had become the same through thunderstorms, occasional gunfire, and other horrors that

might visit us without warning. After the pacing and the trembling, we ended up on the floor together throughout many a long night.

Surprisingly, a family called about Gabe who really wanted an older golden, and was not concerned about his phobia of loud noises. They seemed very suited, rarely went out, and had never boarded their own golden. With many tears I said goodbye to Gabe. Two nights later there was a terrific thunderstorm that came up with little warning, and although they hurried home from their shopping trip, Gabe was already too terrified and insecure in his new environment to be comforted. He was returned to us, and I was secretly happy to have him back, even though I regretted the trauma to both Gabe and the family.

There were a few calls about Gabe during the following five months, but although many callers were fine adopting an older dog, no one could commit to being there for him 24 hours a day. That is a huge commitment, and I began to think that Gabe would be a long term foster for us - a prospect that I welcomed. His face, his eyes, his gentleness and his manners had also completely won over Erin and Jeremy when they temporarily fostered Gabe for us while we were out of town.

Because our home owners association restricts the number of dogs that are allowed each household, and we were over the limit, we continued to advertise Gabe. I believed as long as we were actively seeking a home for him, they would relax the rules a bit, but I had very little faith that a suitable permanent home could be found for him. So my heart adopted him.

I should have known that fostering always brings the unexpected, and one day a lady called about Gabe. By this time, I was extremely particular and skeptical, not wanting Gabe (or me) to have to go through any more trauma. Was she home all the time? She was. Did she know how to deal with thunderstorm phobic dogs? She had

just lost her fearful golden a few months before. Did she have a fenced in yard? Not only that, she had a pool in which there was a ramp so a water dog could easily enter and exit. Did she mind an older dog? Since she was older and lived alone, she preferred a sweet, older dog. Would she board him when she went on vacations? Her vacation home was at the beach, and she intended to take her dog with her. What kind of dog food would she choose? The brand that got the highest rating on the GRREAT charts. Was she golden savvy? She had adopted rescue dogs before from Gold Heart, as had her daughter.

She was such a perfect match for Gabe, I had to let him go. I consoled myself with the thought that the two of them would fill each other's life with love and delight in each other's companionship. I thought I might lose my husband at the same time, since he said it was such a wonderful situation, he wanted to be adopted too.

Since the adoption, I have received many updates about Gabe and his happy owner. They have bonded, go nearly everywhere together, and she has even used Rescue Remedy to good success when a thunderstorm ensues.

A day doesn't go by when I don't think about Gabe and thank whatever gods there be that this particular Golden traumatized by man and nature is precisely where he should be. It makes my heart sing!



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST POC, CINDY JONES

I have always been drawn to Golden Retrievers. I adopted my first puppy, Jake, in 1993. He was wonderful friend who went to the Rainbow Bridge at the age of 13. I miss him every single day!

Many years passed by before I heard of GRREAT. Luckily, my new husband, Jim, had previously adopted two GRREAT dogs. After moving into our home, we decided we were ready to begin our search for our Golden. We began to go to GRREAT events, learning about the organization and how to adopt. Scanning the GRREAT web site made us quite anxious about getting our mitts on one of the many gorgeous Golden.

At an Adoption Day in Bel Air, I met the woman who changed my life, Lynne Glennon, a very knowledgeable, seasoned Foster Home. Lynne suggested that we become a Foster Home as it was a wonderful way to start a relationship with GRREAT. We signed up, which was super easy since we were already approved to

adopt. She was right, it has been a wonderful experience. Thanks Lynne!

On April 4, 2008 we were approved as a Foster Home and we heard about a Foster boy named Goose almost immediately. One LONG week later, my Golden Goose 08-067 arrived. We were "Failed Fosters" from the moment we laid eyes on him. We made him an official part of the family on April 26, 2008.

Since then, I've gone on to foster Bogie 08-131, Rascal 08-182, Bogey 08-202 and Molson 09-030. To permanently represent these foster boys, I have a paw print tattoo for each of them on my left foot, I will truly carry them with me for the rest of my life.

Recently, Lucinda invited me to join the POC Team and I am very happy to oblige. I truly expect to learn as much from my foster homes as I teach them. What a wonderful ride!



Cindy Jones with her sweet Golden Goose 08-067 at the 2008 Dog Walk.



"This tasty recipe was taste tested by Milo 07-047 and four dog friends. They gave it Four Paws Up!"



Peanut Butter and Carrot Cake

- 1 C Brown rice flour or oat flour
- 1 t Baking Soda
- 1/4 C Peanut Butter
- 1/4 C Vegetable Oil
- 1 C Shredded Carrots
- 1 t Vanilla
- 1/3 C Honey
- 1 Egg

Mix flour and baking soda. Add remaining ingredients. Pour into greased 8" round cake pan and bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Let cool. Mix



cream cheese, cinnamon and honey for icing. Decorate with carrots or marshmallows and crunched up dog biscuits as seen here.