

Golden Tales



2024 HOLIDAY ISSUE
MID-FLORIDA GOLDEN RETRIEVER CLUB



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Golden Heart Trophy
In Memory of Paula Black

Our December specialty show was dedicated to club member Paula Black who sadly passed away this year. The Golden Heart Trophy is a beautiful tribute that the El khorchi and Napoli families made possible, continuing to ensure that Paula will remain in our hearts and memories for years to come. Congratulations to the inaugural winner of the Golden Heart Trophy, in memory of Paula, GCHG CH SKYLINE'S BAD & BOUJEE bred by Rachel & Ryan Tepera, owned by Courtney Higgins and Ryan Tepera. Boujee was shown by Ryan Tepera.

From the President's Desk . . .



December 2024

As we approach the end of this year and the start of a new one, I would like to take a moment to thank all of our members for making each year so successful. Our club is one of the largest and most active breed clubs in the country, with over 200 members and a very full schedule of events. Each year we hold two hunt tests, a fun match with obedience, rally, and conformation, two specialties, a health clinic, CCA with a breeder's education seminar, an obedience/rally trial, and various fun days so our members can learn about different venues of competition like barn hunt, dock diving, and agility. We also host monthly field training days for all levels to emphasize and promote the breed's primary purpose. None of this would be possible without our dedicated members who give their time and effort to this fantastic hobby that we all share.

December is a great time of year to get together with friends and family, so I always enjoy seeing everyone at the hunt test, the specialty at Royal Canin, and our annual Christmas party. Coming into the new year I look forward to more opportunities to meet in person and welcome new members into our community.

Robin Burket

2024 Year-end Member Recognition Awards

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club presented its 2024 Member Awards at the annual Christmas party held December 14 at the home of former club president Ann Rowe in Sorrento FL.

Outstanding Services Award in Memory of Susan Fulenwider

Robin Bowen

Mover and Shaker Award

Susan Sherman

Above and Beyond Award

Ann Rowe

Rookies of the Year Award

Sam Hajas

Taylor Desmond

Nancy McCune Member of the Year

Chris Jeffrey

Certificates of Appreciation

Donna Hogan

Marilynn Guard



Donna Hogan



Ann Rowe



Sam Hajas & Taylor Desmond



Marilynn Guard

MFGRC Presents 2024 Year-End Awards

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club presented its 2024 year-end awards at the club's annual Christmas party on December 14 at the home of club members Ann and Bob Rowe in Sorrento FL.

Dog of the Year Awards

Dog of the Year award winners received custom car magnets from the club that were created by club member Anney Doucette of K9-Design.

Agility Dog of the Year: Pippa - Nina DePetris
(fifth consecutive win for Nina; second for Pippa)
Knox's Pip Pip Hooray MX MXJ MXF NFP

Show Dog of the Year: Royal - Mustapha & Carlotta El khorchi

Hunt Dog of the Year: Gryphon - Ann Lowry

Rally Dog of the Year: Mia - Michele Throm
Cachet's Dare to Dream CD BN RM RAE NAP NJP BCAT CGC TKN CCA

Field Dog of the Year - Not presented

Tracking Dog of the Year - Not presented

Upland Hunting Dog of the Year - Not presented
(Perpetual trophy donated by Elizabeth Scherer)

Versatility Award: Not presented

Obedience Dog of the Year: Not presented



Nina DePetris and Pippa

SPECIAL AWARDS

Fallchase Owner-Handler Award: Gunnar - Jenny Ford

Received perpetual trophy donated by Fallchase Kennel

Gold Standard Challenge - Not presented

(Perpetual trophy donated by Kristin Sipus In memory of Jagger, Sophie & Fisher, three MFGRC Champion Master Hunters)



Michele Throm



Mustapha & Carlotta El khorchi

MFGRC Announces 2025 Officers and Board Members

The following were confirmed to be the members of the 2025 Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club officers and board as the result of an election held December 14 at the club's annual meeting.

President – Robin Burket

Vice President – Christine McDaniel

Secretary – Cindy Patz

Treasurer – Robin Bowen

Board Members:

Pam Ginn

Camille Nasca

Brian Parker

Kristin Sipus

Julie Wangelin

Mustapha El khorchi

Amanda Fell

Susan Sherman

Morgan Brooks



Michelle Thom's Golden girl
"Ary" showing off her 2024 Rally
Dog of the Year Award.

MFGRC

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club, Inc. (MFGRC) was founded in 1984 by a group of Golden Retriever enthusiasts who came together in order to pursue ways of promoting and enjoying their Goldens. We are currently a member club of both the Golden Retriever Club of America (GRCA) and the American Kennel Club (AKC).

MFGRC is licensed by the AKC to hold conformation shows, obedience and rally trials, agility trials, and retriever hunting tests. We also hold Working Certificate / Working Certificate Excellent tests in accordance with the rules of the GRCA, and also offer a breed/obedience match every year.

In addition, MFGRC offers an ongoing slate of seminars, clinics and "fun days" to encompass all aspects of the Golden Retriever. We promote the versatile competition golden, the gentleman's hunting retriever, and the consummate family pet.

Meet the New Board Members . . .



Amanda Fell . . .

I grew up about 30 miles north of Gainesville, but have been in Orlando for about 20 years now. I am a pediatric nurse who has worked in hospitals, urgent cares, and for 12 years now I have worked at a local pediatricians office. Working in an office with regular business hours finally gave me the opportunity to get a dog. And my dream dog was a golden retriever.

Back then, I knew nothing about ethical breeding or clearances. I just went on the Internet and searched golden retriever puppies. Luckily, I did get a puppy who was ethically bred- a chubby little girl I called “Lucy”. And thus began my love affair with goldens.

Lucy has since passed on from hemangiosarcoma. Losing her was the worst heartbreak of my life. But once you love a golden, it hurts too much not to have one. So four months later in April 2022 I brought home my smart, beautiful “Jovie” girl. “Jovie” and I are taking classes at the Orlando dog training club, which is where I met Camille Nasca who invited me to join MFGRC after attending the Christmas party in 2022.

Since joining, I have made many new friends and have enjoyed volunteering at some of the events. I volunteered at the health clinic in 2023, and got to assist the cardiologist which was really exciting and informative. I have also volunteered at obedience trials as a ring steward. Volunteering as a ring steward, really piqued my interest, and now I have started that journey with Jovie. She recently got her BN so now we will work towards her CD.

All of this to say, golden retrievers are my passion. There is so much I don’t yet know, but I am so excited to learn and grow. I will forever be someone who will strive to protect and preserve this wonderful breed and learn everything I can to do just that.



Morgan Brooks . . .

I started in the world of dogs with Goosecreek PBGVs in North Carolina and consumed myself into the dog show world during my childhood while my mother was an active duty, Navy Seabee. We competed in agility, flyball, frisbee and of course conformation. I found my place working for breeders, helping them with their litters and raising their show dogs and eventually handling them in the ring to achieve the goals of their owners.

Monark Goldens started almost 20 years ago after I married my husband to get his golden retriever, Calvin. Our first golden together, Lucy, started our breeding program with the support of many breeders. We have bred, raised and shown many champions of our own. Owners of our dogs have been very successful with performance work, achieving so many titles!!

Our dogs are raised with our family of two teenage boys. My oldest, Julian, has followed my passion for our dogs and competes in junior showmanship and in the breed ring, finishing his own goldens championships and grand championships. My youngest, Silas, showed his one dog and loves to take him dock diving, but his real passion is baseball.

Conformation is where my focus has always been, I love the entire process of breeding to presenting our beautiful breed. I have helped many brand-new people learn to groom and show and I really enjoy watching their success.

Meet the New Board Members . . .



Susan Sherman . . .

I brought home my first golden in 2020, just before COVID, from Robin Bowen. Although I previously had two wonderful Border Collies (couch potatoes), Ripley (Prism's Late Night Rendezvous) quickly became the best dog ever. Following Robin's instructions to the letter, I joined the Golden Retriever Club of America and the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club. I also started my journey into Obedience and Conformation, as Robin recommends that everyone obtain a Canine Good Citizen title. From the moment I won the first trial, I was hooked. I had no idea what I was doing in the beginning, but Ripley and I continue to be a great team in anything that we do.

My volunteering for the MFGRC started in 2022 when Andy Hall reached out and asked me to help out with the annual Rally/Obedience trial. Even though I train in obedience, I had no earthly idea how to be a Steward. That one event opened my eyes to a completely difference side of Obedience, which I quickly jumped onboard with. From there, I volunteered at the Fun

Match and became the New Title Rosette coordinator in 2023. At the end of 2023, I was honored to be named MFGRC Member of the Year.

In 2024, I was asked by Camille Nasca to be the Chief Ring Steward for the annual Rally/Obedience Trial. Again, not knowing what this position meant or what was required, I started researching to find out everything that was needed to be successful.

Coordinating all of the volunteers needed for a trial is a large task, but we have such great members of the MFGRC that it was a huge success! Growing up, I had always helped my dad run wrestling tournaments, so helping with a dog trial is no different and a great way to meet more people who have the same interests.

Organizing data and communicating with others is something I regularly do at my day job as an Engineering Supervisor. I run a division of 160 personnel in Systems Engineering, so communicating and organizing are keys to success (along with some other traits). I train multiple times a week at the Orlando Dog Training Club with both of my goldens, 4-year old Ripley and 11-month old Regan (Prism-Caribbean Preferred Stock).

I would like to see the club continue to be financially stable, while growing the active member base and active member opportunities. It is wonderful to be able to try different sports without having to purchase a whole training course. I would also like to see the active member base grow with members reaching out to volunteer regularly. The volunteers for our events is what makes the club.

Mustapha El khorchi . . .

With almost 30 years in the Golden Retriever community as a breeder and handler, I've built deep connections within the breed and would love the chance to give back to the club, therefore I am honored to be considered for a position on the board, where I believe my experience and dedication would contribute to the continued success of the club. My journey with Golden Retrievers has been a rewarding one, with some milestones along the way, such as my dog "Andy's" Sporting Group win at the 2018 Royal Canin National Specialty, and "Boss's" Golden of the Year recognition in 2021. We're also grateful for the achievements of our current young Golden, "Royal".

As a judge, CCA evaluator, and mentor with the Golden Retriever Club of America (GRCA), I've had the privilege of learning and sharing a great deal about the breed, and I'm eager to contribute in ways that support the club's goals and success. I look forward to any opportunity to support MFGRC.



IN MEMORIUM

*It is important to say thank you
and say it often. At this time we say thank
you to Paula Black for her unwavering
friendship and kindness, for her
passionate dedication to her goldens, and
for the times she reminded us to laugh a
little louder, love a little deeper and hold
each other a little closer. She fought a
brave fight with cancer, yet she never let it
dim the light she shared with the world.
She will be missed by many.*

We thank you Paula – for the moments.



2024 December Specialty Report . . .

Hello Fellow Club Members,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Caroline Kendrick, for chairing MFGRC's Independent Specialty. This was Caroline's 12th year of chairing and, as always, she has done a stellar job.

Once again, our wonderful club members have stepped up to the plate to help ensure that our December specialty was a resounding success. Your generous donations throughout the years have made it possible for us to award beautiful trophies that celebrate our incredible breed.

We want to send a special shout out to several of our new members who sponsored so many of our trophies and as always, a thank you to the members who consistently donate each year to our trophy fund. We are so appreciative of your generosity. Their names are listed in the specialty catalog and in this newsletter.

This year our Specialty attracted an entry of 166 golden retrievers. Each year our specialty is the largest specialty at Royal Canin. Every golden, from the youngest at just 6 months old to our gorgeous and enthusiastic 10 year old, brought joy, wonder and a few tears to everyone watching. Thank you so much for supporting this specialty and bringing your beautiful golden retrievers to strut their stuff. This specialty would not happen without your support. Thank you.

Camille and I would also like to thank Morgan Brooks, smiling while working fast with set up long before the sun rose. You made our job so much easier and less stressful. Michele Panetta for handing out those wonderful placement bumpers donated by Mustapha & Carlotta. Good judges are invaluable to any dog show, so much thanks to our Junior Judge, Dan Dahlberg and our Specialty Judge Linda Robey.

Each exhibitor left that ring knowing their dogs were truly judged on their merits. In addition, no specialty can be successful without knowledgeable Stewards. Thank you, Cathy Dahlberg, who has been our steward for multiple years and runs a seamless ring and Kristin Sipus for standing on your feet all day assisting the steward. This pair ran our ring like a well-oiled machine.

I would also like to extend a special thank you to Camille Nasca for her endless research in finding these terrific prizes year after year for the past 12 years. The tags on each prize and the display board listing each sponsor is truly a special touch. I am grateful to all who eagerly sponsor these prizes every year. To all the exhibitors, I hope you enjoyed your time with us while feasting on the candy provided for that extra shot of energy. This has been my donation for the past few years, and I must admit I got a little carried away this year. The remaining candy is bringing joy to my coworkers who are already asking me to open up my bag to keep them going on their long flights.

Finally, thank you to Mustapha and Carlotta El Khorchi of Leongolden and the Napoli Family for leading the charge to dedicate this show to club member Paula Black. Paula, who sadly passed away this year, will be missed every day by those who knew and loved her. This beautiful tribute that the El khorchi and Napoli families made possible will continue to ensure that Paula will remain in our hearts and memories for years to come. Congratulations to the inaugural winner of the Golden Heart Trophy, in memory of Paula, GCHG CH SKYLINE'S BAD & BOUJEE bred by Rachel & Ryan Tepera, owned by Courtney Higgins and Ryan Tepera. Bougee was shown by Ryan Tepera. For those of you who were unable to attend the specialty, there are photos in this newsletter and on our FB page of the beautiful trophy.

Thank you all. Wishing you the happiest of Holidays and a safe New Year filled with peace, love and success. We hope to see you at our 2025 events.

Caroline Kendrick, Specialty Chair
Camille Nasca, Trophy Chair





2024 Specialty Trophy Sponsors

We are so appreciative of your generosity!

| CLASS | SPONSOR |
|--|---|
| BEST OF BREED | THE CLOUDMAN FAMILY - CLOUD9 GOLDENS |
| BEST OF OPPOSITE SEX | MICHELINE LABERGE & TRINITY LONSDALE - CHEVALINE GOLDENS |
| BEST OF WINNERS | JULIE WANGLIN - QUESTAN GOLDENS |
| WINNRS DOG | JULIE WANGLIN - QUESTAN GOLDENS |
| WINNERS BITCH | DUANE & LORI ASHE |
| RESERVE WINNERS DOG | NANCY SIGMON & CH JACKSON - GOLDEN MEMORIES |
| RESERVE WINNERS BITCH | LEONGOLDEN & CHATHAM NAPOLI IN MEMORY OF PAULA BLACK |
| BEST JR HANDLER | MONARK GOLDENS |
| RESERVE BEST JR HANDLER | MONARK GOLDENS |
| SELECT DOG | CAMILLE NASCA IN MEMORY OF PAULA BLACK |
| SELECT BITCH | LEONGOLDEN & CHATHAM NAPOLI IN MEMORY OF PAULA BLACK |
| BEST VETERAN | JEFF & JULIE SHEALY - IN MEMORY OF HOLLY, HENRY AND ELIOT |
| BEST PUPPY | JULIE WANGLIN - QUESTAN GOLDENS |
| BEST OWNER HANDLER | KRISTIN SIPUS - RICHWOOD GOLDENS |
| 1ST PLACE – 6-9 MONTH DOG | THE WILKERSON FAMILY |
| 1ST PLACE – 9-12 MONTH DOG | BARB WHITE -IN MEMORY OF TRAX, MOCHA AND CONNOR |
| 1ST PLACE – 12-15 MONTH DOG | BARB WHITE -IN MEMORY OF TRAX, MOCHA AND CONNOR |
| 1ST PLACE – 15-18 MONTH DOG | THE CHURCH FAMILY |
| 1ST PLACE – AMAT/OWN HANDLER | LEONGOLDEN & CHATHAM NAPOLI IN MEMORY OF PAULA BLACK |
| 1ST PLACE – 6 & UNDER 12 MTH BBE DOG | LEONGOLDEN & CHATHAM NAPOLI IN MEMORY OF PAULA BLACK |
| 1ST PLACE – BRED BY DOG | LEONGOLDEN & CHATHAM NAPOLI IN MEMORY OF PAULA BLACK |
| 1ST PLACE – AMERICAN BRED DOG | BETTY LAMBERT - IN MEMORY OF BEAMER |
| 1ST PLACE – OPEN DOG | LEONGOLDEN & CHATHAM NAPOLI IN MEMORY OF PAULA BLACK |
| 1ST PLACE – 6-9 MONTH BITCH | STONEWOOD GOLDENS |
| 1ST PLACE – 9-12 MONTH BITCH | STONEWOOD GOLDENS |
| 1ST PLACE – 12-15 MONTH BITCH | CHRIS JEFFREY, IN MEMORY OF BOO |
| 1ST PLACE – 15-18 MONTH BITCH | STONEWOOD GOLDENS |
| 1ST PLACE – AM/OWN HANDLER | LORI CALLAHAN |
| 1ST PLACE – 6 & UNDER 12 MTH BBE BITCH | LEONGOLDEN & CHATHAM NAPOLI IN MEMORY OF PAULA BLACK |
| 1ST PLACE – BRED BY BITCH | THE WILKERSON FAMILY |
| 1ST PLACE – AM BRED BITCH | BETTY LAMBERT, IN MEMORY OF MIRANDA |
| 1ST PLACE – OPEN BITCH | LEONGOLDEN & CHATHAM NAPOLI IN MEMORY OF PAULA BLACK |
| 1ST PLACE NOVICE JUNIOR | MONARK GOLDENS |
| 1ST PLACE NOVICE INTERMEDIATE | MONARK GOLDENS |
| 1ST PLACE NOVICE SENIOR | MONARK GOLDENS |
| 1ST PLACE OPEN JUNIOR | MONARK GOLDENS |
| 1ST PLACE OPEN INTERMEIDATE | MONARK GOLDENS |
| 1ST PLACE OPEN SENIOR | MONARK GOLDENS |
| 1ST PLACE MASTER | MONARK GOLDENS |
| 1ST PLACE 7-10 VETERAN DOG | CONNIE & BOB ADAMS - WINDSOR GOLDEN RETRIEVERS |
| 1ST PLACE 10-12 VETERAN DOG | CONNIE & BOB ADAMS - WINDSOR GOLDEN RETRIEVERS |
| 1ST PLACE 12 & OVER VET DOG | CONNIE & BOB ADAMS - WINDSOR GOLDEN RETRIEVERS |
| 1ST PLACE 7-10 VETERAN BITCH | SALLY ELLIOT - IN MEMORY OF SPLASH |
| 1ST PLACE 10-12 VETERAN BITCH | ANDY & BARBARA HALL IN MEMORY OF MO |
| 1ST PLACE 12 & OVER VET BITCH | ANDY & BARBARA HALL IN MEMORY OF MARLEY |
| 1ST PLACE H R DOG | MICHELE PANETTA, IN MEMORY OF CH AXL MH & CH JAGGER MH |
| 1ST PLACE H R BITCH | MICHELE PANETTA, IN MEMORY OF JADE GN CDX SH CCA |
| GENERAL TROPHY FUND | |
| DIAMOND - \$200 & OVER | LEONGOLDEN & CHATHAM NAPOLI IN MEMORY OF PAULA BLACK |
| DIAMOND - \$200 & OVER | THE NAPOLI FAMILY - IN MEMORY OF PAULA BLACK |
| SILVER - \$100 - \$149 | MAGIK GOLDEN RETRIEVERS - IN MEMORY OF PAULA BLACK |
| | |
| | |

Holiday Moments . . .

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club held its annual Christmas party December 14 at the home of former club president Ann Rowe in Sorrento FL. There was a great turnout with fun and treats galore! **Yum!**

After a hefty meal, the election of new officers and board members took place. Also the 2024 year end awards and member recognition awards were presented.



Dues are due . . .

Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club members – time to renew your membership

Membership fees for 2025 are \$35 for individual, family, or associate memberships and can be paid through the mail or online. Online renewal can be done at this link: <https://square.link/u/GcShSCNm>

Membership renewals are due and payable on or *before* January 1, 2025. Memberships not renewed by January 31, 2025, are automatically terminated. Expired memberships must reapply as New Members. Renewals also will be taken at the club's Christmas party on December 14. **Direct any correspondence regarding membership renewal to Christine McDaniel, Membership Chair at crmcdaniel4@gmail.com**

People who become club members in October, November, and December 2024 do not have to renew for 2025; their membership will carry over.

If renewing by mail, please indicate your category, make your check payable to MFGRC and mail to:

Christine McDaniel
MFGRC Membership Chair
4 Valencia Street
Palm Coast, FL 32137



IN MEMORIAM Jackie Mertens

Jackie will truly be missed by all who knew her. She was an icon of female strength in the male dominated world of Field. She and her dog "Cotton" were a spectacular team.

A celebration of her life will be held January 18 at Red Dog Ranch - 396 NE Oats Ave - Madison FL 32340 Hosted by Jackie's family and friends.



The dogs I know have more soul, more heart, more love, more connection, more patience, and more softness that any human I've ever met. They don't ask for anything, no explanations, no justifications. They just stay, steady and sure, as if they've always known what you need before you do.

People complicate love. They wrap it in conditions, dress it in expectations. Drive it towards pain and disappointment. A dog doesn't do that. Their love is raw, honest, and without strings. Without complications. They see you ... not the version you show the world, but the one you keep buried. And they love that version most of all. I've met plenty of people, but none have ever matched the soft, gentle loyalty of a dog. They don't try to fix you; they just sit beside you, whole and true. Through thick and thin. And that's more than most humans will ever understand.

R.M. Drake, Pet ResQ Inc.



New Title Rosettes Available to Eligible MFGRC Members for Accomplishments in 2024

Members of the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club who earn new AKC or GRCA titles for their Golden Retrievers during calendar year 2024 may be eligible to receive a new title rosette from the club. The new title rosette program has been part of the MFGRC for many years and is one the club leadership is happy to continue.

In order to be eligible to receive a new title rosette from the club, a member must have worked at least one club event during the year, or have done equivalent work for the club behind-the-scenes (subject to verification). The stipulation is in place to encourage members to help with club events and activities.

The program is for new **AKC** or **GRCA** titles won between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024. The deadline for receiving applications is end of business on January 5, 2025.

Please read and follow directions carefully:

There is only one way to request a new title rosette: the requests must be sent via email to MFGRC board member Susan Sherman at this address: Ripley.GoldenBear@gmail.com

No requests sent to any other email address or via text, phone call or any other method will be accepted. All requests will get an acknowledgement via email when received. IF you do not get an acknowledgment, please email Susan and inquire.

The subject line of the email should be **"New Title Rosettes."** Requests should be in the body of the email (not as an attachment) using this format:

A. OWNER NAME

B. DOG'S REGISTERED NAME including all titles (and do not add in titles that are precursors for others, only the highest title for that venue – example, do not list 'Sam's Susie Q, RN, RA, RE' because the Rally Novice and Rally Advanced titles are precursors for the Rally Excellent title. Your request should just say 'Sam's Susie Q, RE' in the dog's registered name.

C. LIST ALL AKC AND/OR GRCA TITLES EARNED IN 2024: This is the place to put in precursor titles, IF they were earned in 2024. Again, please do not list them as part of the dog's registered name. This creates additional work for the rosettes committee.

D. VOLUNTEER WORK: Please list what events you worked at or what you did for the club in 2024 (all subject to verification).

E. IF UNSURE ABOUT WHICH TITLES ARE LISTED AND WHICH ARE NOT:

- Go to akc.org
- Click "products and services" tab
- On the left of that page, click 'individual dog award record and points progression'
- Click "find a dog"
- Input YOUR dog's name or registration number and then click the dog's name
- Once the dog is on the report page, click 'view points' to the right and your dog's info will populate
- Please note the order the AKC lists the titles in – titles have a specified order and MFGRC wants to be correct on new title rosettes
- Please DO NOT use K9 data as a reference to order new title rosettes as the information there is often not listed in proper AKC form

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE of what the email should look like:

- A. Pam Ginn
- B. Richwood's Every Move You Make at Kestrel Farm
JH WC CCA
- C. JH CCA
- D. Worked at the Feb and Nov Hunt Tests

The goal is to get the rosettes done and into the hands of eligible members as fast as possible. Distribution is planned for the February Hunt Test.

NOTE: If you will not be able to pick up your rosette(s) at the February Hunt Test, the rosettes can be mailed to you. You must mail a check for \$10, per owner, up to three rosettes, made out to MFGRC, to:

Robin Bowen
3001 SW College Rd.
PMB41
Ocala, FL 34474

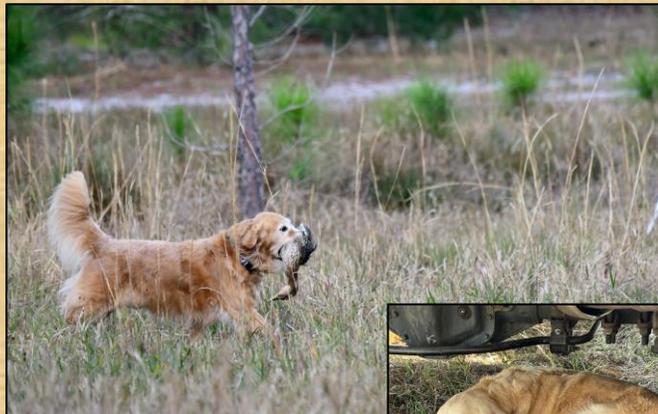
The deadline for payment is January 30, 2025. If you are lucky enough to have more than three, you will need to include another \$10 for the next rosettes to be mailed.

Congratulations on your successes in 2024! Please let us know of any questions.

Susan Sherman
Robin Bowen
MFGRC New Title Rosettes Committee

HUNT TEST CANDIDS

Loads of compliments on the December Hunt Test event! The property and judges were well received and the volunteers did an exceptional job. The college students from Outlanders at UCF were excellent and asked about coming back for next hunt test.



Service Dog Spotlight . . .

PAWS FOR COURAGE:

Vickie Schroeder's Journey with Moxie and Levi

An interview by Meeka Cook from the December edition of *Port Orange Neighbors* magazine.
Submitted by MFGRC club member Andy Hall.

MFGRC member Vickie Schroeder's journey into the world of animal assisted therapy began over two decades ago, evolving into a passionate commitment to enhancing lives through the unique bond between humans and dogs. Vickie shares insights from her inspiring experiences with "Moxie" and "Levi", shedding light on the profound impact of canine companion therapy.

How did you first get involved with service and therapy dogs?

In the mid-1990's, my husband and I started obedience training with two Golden Retrievers and then added a Labrador Retriever. A lady approached me after a couple of classes and asked if I ever considered doing therapy work with them. She saw something in them that I hadn't seen or was even aware of.

We tested and certified all three as Therapy Dogs. I started working them in a hospital. I quickly found that two of my dogs worked differently in the Psychiatric Unit than they did doing bedside visits. I started training differently and studying animal behavior with a different outlook.



What inspired you to work with dogs like Moxie and Levi for therapeutic purposes?

I was asked to join a group of therapy dog teams at St. Joseph Children's Treatment Center in Dayton OH. This was in their Intensive Treatment Unit for young children. We began a 10 week program that focused the children on activities (through the help of the dogs) where they could start understanding day-to-day life skills. One example is personal space boundaries. By watching as introductions of an "unknown dog and human" to the group, the children could begin to understand what a personal space boundary was. Dogs are so good at demonstrating their boundaries!

Then in 2006, I began another program with the Miami Valley Juvenile Rehabilitation Center, where we did a program for teen boys and girls. In 2013, I relocated to Robins AFB in Georgia. The program continued and is still in existence.

Can you describe a particularly rewarding or memorable experience during your work in this field?

My most memorable experience was seeing first-hand how the use of a therapy dog quickly gave a young child confidence.

While working with the children at St. Joseph Children's Treatment Center, there was one young girl (age 5 or 6) who was abused most of her life. We were teaching how to reward behaviors we wanted versus those we didn't. Of course, all the dogs loved this night because they got a lot of treats!

Continued on next page . . .

PAWS FOR COURAGE *continued . . .*



This one young girl started working with Jesse, my Golden Retriever. I had Jesse stand, gave her his lead, and then stood behind the young girl. I told her she could ask Jesse to sit. She didn't seem very sure about him listening, so I told her she could do it again. She used a very soft voice and told Jesse to sit. Jesse sat. This young girl's shoulders and head came up, and she screamed, "he listened!" Her smile was all it took for me to realize that this was probably the first time she had confidence in herself. I told her to tell him to down, which she did, and Jesse promptly downed. The look on her face – her smile and eyes – showed how much Jesse's responses gave her confidence that she didn't know she had.

How do Moxie and Levi prepare for a day of work? Are there specific routines or training sessions they go through?

Grooming is at the top of the list (bathing, brushing, nail trimming, etc.) for all therapy work. They both know that when a vest comes out, someone is going to work. It only takes one sniff for them to know who will work that day.

Before entering any building, they both know to find a grassy spot. A session can be anywhere from an hour to four hours. Knowing your dog is key to knowing when another trip to their grassy area is warranted.

Where do Moxie and Levi work most frequently?

Moxie and I are on the Halifax Health Therapy Dog Team. We work mainly with Adult Behavioral Services and Children/Adolescents' Behavioral Services. We

also do patient visits and the ER. Moxie and Levi work in Assisted Living Facilities, and they attend local events and meetings with me.

As members of Companions for Courage, either Moxie or Levi work with me in a Courtroom in Seminole County in Domestic Violence Injunction Court. We also attend the Quarterly Domestic Violence Advisory Committee meetings and work in the Victim Advocate Office of the Port Orange Police Department.

How have they impacted the people they meet?

Everyone who meets either Moxie or Levi remarks on how much better they feel and enjoy their presence. One notable visit was with a gentleman who was hospitalized for high blood pressure and heart rate. After Moxie and I entered the room and she put her head on his lap so he could pet her, his daughter noticed both rates were coming down on the monitors. After we walked away, everything went back up. So, we went back to him. Again, the monitors started coming down the moment he put his hand on her head. I've always read about the research, but seeing it happen was wonderful!

What advice could you give someone interested in getting involved with therapy dog services?

To me, the first thing is to have a good relationship with your dog. Train together to learn behaviors, weaknesses, strengths, and stressors for the dog and human.

"It's a team effort, first and foremost!"

Inside the Conformation Ring . . .

What NOT to Wear

By Sandy Weaver

Originally published in the July 2024 Canine Chronicle

You've probably seen some of these 'dog show fashion don'ts' in the ring ...

- Flip flops
- Casual attire
- Flowy garments
- Overly showy garments
- Colors that are wrong for the dog being shown

Yes – it's a DOG show. And yes, it's a dog SHOW. There are ways to be smart about what you wear in the ring so that the judge can focus on your dog, and isn't that what you want the judge to focus on?

Beginning at the ground, understand that the judge will see your feet. By virtue of watching the dog gait, your feet will be in view. Try not to make them a focal point. The goal is for the judge to watch your dog's feet, not yours.

1. **Wear safe, appropriate shoes.** No flip-flops, clogs, or loose-fitting sandals. Those kinds of shoes can be difficult to run in and could cause you to fall in the ring.
2. **Wear shoes that fade into the background.** The phrase "feet-colored shoes" is a good one to remember. When your shoes match your outfit or the color of our skin/hose if you're wearing a skirt, they become part of the scenery, not the focal point.
3. **Wear shoes that are comfortable on you and that you feel secure in while running.** It's hard to focus on gaiting your dog at the appropriate speed when your feet hurt, or you can feel a blister blossoming on your heel. PS: keep blister band-aids in your tack box, just in case. They're magical!

Moving up, think about the fabric of your pants/dress/skirt.

Think about the color of the dog you're showing.

3. **Black clothing behind a black dog is only correct if the dog's topline isn't.** If your dog has a correct topline, you want to wear a contrasting color, not a matching one.

"If your outfit would be appropriate for a night out at the clubs, it may be too flashy for the show ring."

1. **If you've ever had your own colors done, you understand that some colors make you look wonderful, and some make you look washed-out.** It's the same with dogs. Play with different colors behind your dog, and you can do this on your computer. Take a good, well-lit picture of your dog that shows the true coat color, remove the background, and then add different colors to the background. If you don't already have an app to do this, you can use **Canva**. The free version will let you use the background remover once, and then you can use their color palate to fill in different colors behind your dog. Red dogs can look amazing in front of purple, blue, and teal, and can look dreadful in front of khaki. The color you wear can make a break the judge's first impression of your dog.
2. **Patterns can confuse the picture – especially big, complex patterns.** You want the dog to be the focal point, not your outfit.

Think about the fabric's texture, weight, and volume.

1. **Especially with a small or medium-sized dog, flowing skirts and wide-leg pants are problematic.** Skirts can cover the dog's head on the move, or flap in their face and startle them.
2. **Fabrics like corduroy and taffeta can be quite loud on the move,** which can startle your dog and cause a distraction for the judge. In general, natural fabrics are quieter than synthetic fabrics.
3. **Light, floaty fabrics can show more than you intend.** Test them in sunny, breezy conditions before wearing them to show your dog. Have a trusted friend take pictures so you can see what everyone else might see.

Think about what the outfit says.

1. **Business casual or business attire is going to be appropriate,** as long as you choose colors that compliment your dog.
2. **Unless the show-giving club has announced a "casual attire" theme,** casual attire signals to the judge that you're not very serious about this whole show thing.
3. **If your outfit would be appropriate for a night out at the clubs, it may be too flashy for the show ring.** Yes, even if you're in the Group or BIS ring at Westminster, your outfit still needs to showcase the dog, not you.

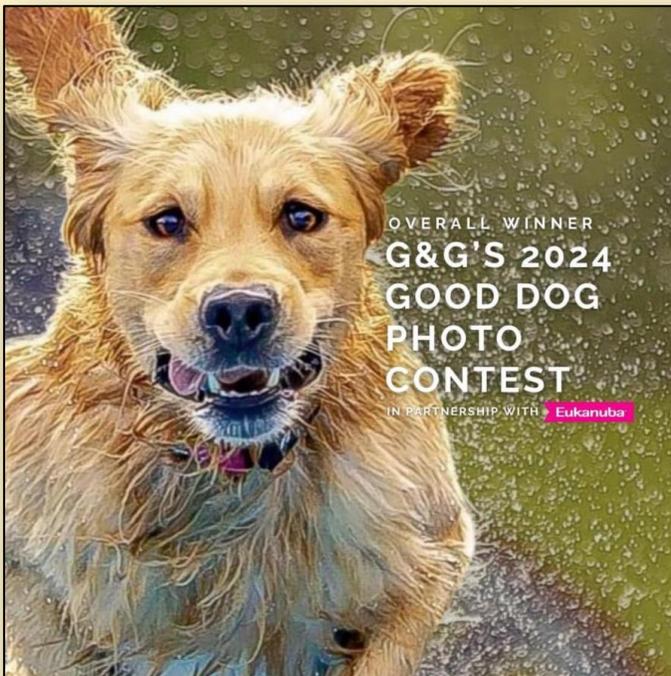
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What NOT to Wear . . . (continued)

The clothing you wear doesn't have to be expensive. Some of the best dog show attire comes from resale shops, consignment stores, garage sales, and friends' closets. Once you know the color and style, looking for the right dog show clothes to highlight your dog becomes easy. Think about ballroom dancing – showing a dog is very much like that. One dancer – usually the man in a male/female team is the frame and the other is the detail. Together, they create a harmonious, compelling picture. Each, by themselves, would be lovely and presentable, yet together, they are mesmerizing.

THIS is what you are shooting for. You are the frame, and your dog is the detail. You want the judge to be mesmerized by the picture you and your dog create as you are in the ring. You want the judge to have to tear their eyes away from the two of you while being focused on your dog. You accomplish that with practice as well as with the right outfit to showcase your dog. Have fun shopping and showing!

Sandy Weaver is an author, consultant, professional speaker and AKC judge of the Working Group, some Non-Sporting and Toy breeds and Junior Showmanship. She also works with clubs across the US presenting seminars to help people win more in the conformation ring. When she's not traveling to consult, speak, or to judge, she's spoiling her Siberian Husky and Standard Poodle.



WINNER! WINNER!

Four year old **Gryphon** likes to “have a good time,” says his owner, Anne Lowry. For him, this means training for field trials, participating in dock diving competitions and going anywhere he can with Lowry. With a Master Hunter title from the American Kennel Club, Gryphon also enjoys being outside, especially by the water, and this year he won the national championship in the Master division of the Ultimate Air Dogs.

Aside from his achievements in the field, Lowry says Gryphon is just a great reason to get up every morning and have a wonderful day.” When she received the call that he took top honors in Garden & Gun’s photo contest, he was of course in the back seat of the car, ready to celebrate.

Captured by friend Rob Robinson at last year’s Ultimate Air Dogs competition, Gryphon’s determined dive earned him second place at that contest – and a perfect ten from the Garden & Gun editors!



Paula Black's Golden boy "Dash" (CH Casey's Rais'n A Ruckus) finished his championship at the December Orlando shows under judge Pam Lambie.

ACCOLADES



Debbie Finch's Golden girl "Abbey" finished her FCAT title at Dog Sports Unlimited at New Smyrna Beach in November.



Linda Smith's Golden boy HR Gryphon Flying Lion Dream CD MH RN CCA DEX, etc, won Master National Championship in October for UAD dock diving.



Ann Rowe's Golden boy "Brody", achieved his senior dock diving title.



More Accolades . . .



Susan Howard's Golden boy "Winston" earned his OTCH16 at the NOC Regional in SC in October with a 199.5 out of a large competitive Open B class plus was High Scoring Veteran Dog. Meanwhile, up at the GRCA's Nationals, Winston was awarded the "OTCH Topbrass Ric O Shay Barty WCX" Trophy for 2023 – this is the 3rd consecutive year he has won this trophy!



Susan Howard's Golden boy "Flyte" finished his obedience UD title with his 5th HIT to be added to the GRCA's Obedience Hall of Fame.



Betty Lambert's Golden boy "Charlie" earned his FCAT title at Dog Sports Unlimited in November.



Taylor Gordon's Golden boys sporting their new ribbons – left to right "Tony" (Rangers Golden Promise DS DJ CGC TKN VHMA FITB) with his Dock Diving Senior Ribbon, "Banner" (Celtics Majik Money Maker DS BCAT CGC TKN VHMA FITB) with his BCat ribbon, and "Parker" (Marvels Celtic Sea Bear CGC VHMA FITB) with his CGC ribbon.



Betty Lambert's Golden boy "Charlie" earned his Dock Diving Junior Excellent 2 title over the Halloween weekend at 24k Diving Dogs in Cairo, GA.



Leslie Anderson's Golden boy "Quince" (GCh Aubridge Dates and Quinces SH, CD, BN, WCS, VCX) earned his WCX in North Carolina in October.

Additional Shout Outs . . .



Donna Hogan's "Willow" and "Sage" and Betty Lambert's "Charlie" dressed up for Halloween as Harry Pawter dogs while dock diving up in Cairo, GA with 24k Diving Dogs.



Happy Birthday Baby! Donna Hogan's Golden girl "Sage" celebrates in style.



First time in the ring, first outing at a big show, first class placing – Ann Rowe's Golden boy "Nicholas" (Magik's Night Before Christmas) took the honors at the December AKC show in Orlando.



Camille Nasca's Golden girl "Shimmer" (Mischief's My Time To Shine TKN CGC CCA) went Winners Bitch for 2 pts from the Owner Handler BOB class in Ocala FL last month.



Liz Scherer's Golden boy "Kody" (Am. CH; SHR; U-CH. U-BVIS; IABCA WBCH Star Crowned Kodiak Island CD BN RE SHU JH FDC CCA CGC TKI WCX VC RATI) finished his second leg towards his UKC HRC Seasoned (HR-Hunting Retriever) title in November at Montverde. Kody also achieved a U-BVIS (UKC Best Veteran in Show) at the North American Briard Club UKC Shows in Fort Myers over Thanksgiving weekend. This is the second time he has been selected for this honor.



Happy holidays to all . . . and to all a good night!