

VOL. 15 ISSUE 3 · DECEMBER 2025

# GOLDEN TALES

The Official Newsletter of The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club



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## From the President's Desk

December 2025

As 2025 draws to a close, I'd like to take a moment to thank all of our members for making another 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, multiple specialties, a health clinic, CCA, 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 specialties at Royal Canin, and our annual Holiday party. Coming into the new year I look forward to more opportunities to meet and welcome new members into our community. Have a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year.

*Best,*

*Robin Burkett*





## Mark your Calendars

### 2026 GRCA Eastern Regional Specialty— *GOLDEN DAZE*

- **Wednesday April 15** - Working Certificate/Working Certificate Excellent
- **Thursday April 16** - Certificate of Conformation Assessment, Obedience, Rally
- **Friday April 17** - Independent Specialty hosted by MFGRC
- **Saturday April 18** - GRCA Eastern Regional Specialty
- **Sunday April 19** - Independent Specialty hosted by MFGRC

## Welcome New Club Members!

We're thrilled to have you join our club! Whether you're here for companionship, competition, or simply to connect with others who share your passion for these wonderful dogs, you've found the right place. Our club is dedicated to promoting the health, happiness, and versatility of Golden Retrievers through education, events, and responsible ownership. We offer a variety of activities—from obedience and field training to social events and breed education—so there's something for everyone. We encourage you to get involved, ask questions, and most importantly, have fun. Our members are always happy to help, and we can't wait to get to know you and your Golden better.

## New Members

- Sandra and Christopher Carrano
- Amanda D'agostino-Biglin
- Deborah Cole-Sedivy
- Jennifer Hoffman
- Jean and Tim McAloon
- Kyle and Dela Prikopa





# Field Training Day & Thanksgiving Cookout

November 2025

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club enjoyed a wonderful Field Training Day and Cookout on Sunday, November 30th, beginning at 9:00 a.m., at Persimmon Hollow Farm in Paisley, Florida.

Members and guests gathered for a productive morning of field training, while others took advantage of the beautiful property to enjoy relaxed walks with their dogs or let them splash and play in the ponds. The day offered something for everyone—whether actively training or simply enjoying time outdoors with fellow Golden enthusiasts.

At midday, participants came together for a delicious pig roast lunch, complemented by a wide variety of shared side dishes. The cookout provided a perfect opportunity to connect, socialize, and enjoy great food in a welcoming, laid-back setting.

Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to making this event such a fun and successful club gathering. We appreciate the camaraderie and support that continue to make MFGRC events so special!





# AKC Hunt Test

## December 2025

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club successfully hosted its AKC Hunt Test on December 5–7, 2025, at Brian Parker's property in Paisley, Florida. This three-day event welcomed competitors across the Junior, Senior, and Master levels and showcased the skill, training, and teamwork of Golden Retrievers and their handlers.

Testing began Friday morning at 8:00 a.m. and concluded Sunday afternoon, with dogs demonstrating strong marking ability, solid training, and impressive natural hunting instincts throughout the weekend. Handlers, judges, workers, and spectators enjoyed a well-run test set against the beautiful field grounds, making for an engaging and rewarding experience for all involved.

MFGRC extends sincere thanks to our judges, test committee, volunteers, and participants who helped make this hunt test a success. Events like these highlight the versatility and working ability of our breed, and we appreciate everyone who contributed their time and support.





# Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Independent Specialty

## December 2025

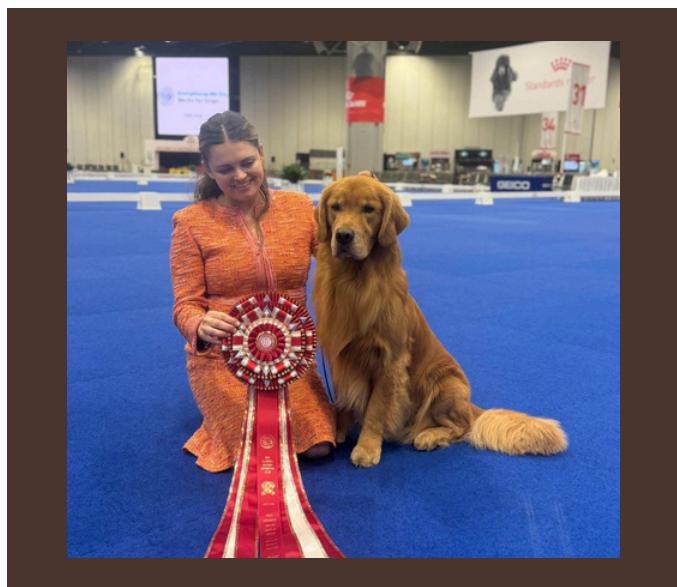
MFGRC Hosts Festive Double Specialty at the Orange County Convention Center!

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club was proud to present its 13th Annual Independent Specialty weekend, featuring a festive Double Specialty held December 12 (Friday) and December 14 (Sunday) at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida.

Friday's Specialty showcased Conformation judged by Mrs. Pamela Oxenberg alongside Junior Showmanship judged by Mr. David Stout. Exhibitors enjoyed a competitive and well-run event, with many outstanding Golden Retrievers and talented juniors stepping into the ring.

The weekend concluded on Sunday with a New Independent Specialty, where Mr. Mustapha El Khorchi presided over both Conformation and Junior Showmanship. His thoughtful evaluations and clear appreciation for breed type made for an engaging and memorable final day.

MFGRC extends sincere thanks to our judges, exhibitors, juniors, volunteers, and Superintendent Onofrio for contributing to another successful specialty weekend. We appreciate everyone who helped make this holiday-season event both enjoyable and rewarding, and we look forward to seeing you at our future specialties!





# Upcoming Field Training 2026

Ready to get your Golden out in the field? Whether you're new to field work or preparing for your next test, our Field Training Day is the perfect chance to practice, learn, and have fun with your dog!

- 📍 Location: Brian Parker's Property — 29536 CR 42 Paisley, FL 32767
- 📅 Date: Once a Month
- 🕒 Time: 8:30am

## Details:

1. How many dogs are you bringing?
2. What level are they in their training?
3. Anything specific you would like help with?
4. Are you willing to run a set up or drill?

We'll be working on retrieving skills, water marks, land marks, and more, with guidance available for all experience levels. Bring your enthusiasm, your dog, and any training gear you use—we'll provide birds and setup support.

All Golden Retrievers (and handlers!) are welcome—come out and enjoy a great day of training and camaraderie.

## Contact:

If you plan to come please email [mfgrcfield@gmail.com](mailto:mfgrcfield@gmail.com) so we can plan our set-ups in advance



© Balsc Strange



# Upcoming GRCA Eastern Regional Specialty — Golden Daze

April 2026

Wednesday April 15 - Working Certificate/Working Certificate Excellent

- Judges: Alan Wilcox, Kelli Fletcher-Riggs, Randall Gerbino, Macy Swift

Thursday April 16 - Certificate of Conformation Assessment

- Evaluators: Mustapha El Khorchi, Kathi Leonhardt, and TBD

Thursday April 16 - Obedience/Rally Trials

- Judge: Karen Schroeder

Friday April 17 - Independent Specialty hosted by MFGRC

- Judge: Ms. Brit Jung - Junior Showmanship, Regular Classes, Intersex
- Judge: Mary Cowen McElroy - Puppy, Veteran, Gun Dog Sweeps

Saturday April 18 - GRCA Eastern Regional Specialty

- Judge: Berna H. Welch - Regular Classes, Intersex
- Judge: Chatham Napoli - Junior Showmanship
- Judge: Cindy Williamson - Puppy, Veteran, Gun Dog Sweeps

Sunday April 19 - Independent Specialty hosted by MFGRC

- Judge: Barbara Madrigrano - Regular Classes, Intersex
- Judge: Megan Lauder milk - Junior Showmanship
- Judge: Bryana Pierce - Puppy, Veteran, Gun Dog Sweeps

## Greater Ocala Dog Show Grounds

The Greater Ocala Dog Club (GODC) was established in 1970. GODC owns 40 lush acres in the heart of horse country in Marion County. Our facility includes three large pole barns with concrete floors, a meeting building with ceiling fans, and large open areas for motorhome parking. Major airports close to Ocala - Orlando & Tampa.

## WC/WCX Grounds

Persimmon Hollow Farms - Paisley Florida. Persimmon Hollow Farms is a privately owned property just outside of DeLand, FL. It is 260 acres with 16 ponds. The property is approximately 1.5 hrs. from the Ocala Dog Show Grounds.

## Obedience/Rally Trial Grounds

Marion Alachua Dog Training Association Facility - Ocala Florida.





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# GOLDEN DAZE



2026 GRCA  
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Only 150 tickets  
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**\*TERMS:** Not good for Thanksgiving,  
Christmas, Easter or any already  
booked week. Winner must use by end  
of 2026. Cleaning fees apply: \$300  
for whole house or \$175 for half house  
to be paid at time of reservation.



# *Mid Florida Golden Retriever Club*

The Mid Florida Golden Retriever Club proudly presents this official statement with gratitude, respect, and admiration as we honor the legacy and enduring spirit of the Golden Retriever breed. The Legacy Award for Best of Breed was created through the generosity and devotion of the El Khorchi family and the Napoli family in tribute to a breed that has enriched the lives of so many and in cherished memory of Paula Black, whose dedication, passion, and love continue to inspire our community. What began last year as a meaningful gesture has now become an important tradition reflecting the values that define MFGRC: unity, excellence, sportsmanship, and an unwavering commitment to preserving the beauty, temperament, and standard of this remarkable breed. This award stands as a symbol of respect for the breeders, exhibitors, handlers, and families who devote their hearts to the Golden Retriever. This year MFGRC also recognizes with pride that one of our own, Mustapha El Khorchi, has been selected to judge the Specialty, adding significance, honor, and heartfelt connection to the presentation of this award to the Best of Breed winner. We offer this statement on behalf of our entire organization with appreciation for the past dedication to the present and hope for the future of the Golden Retriever. With respect and gratitude, The Mid Florida Golden Retriever Club

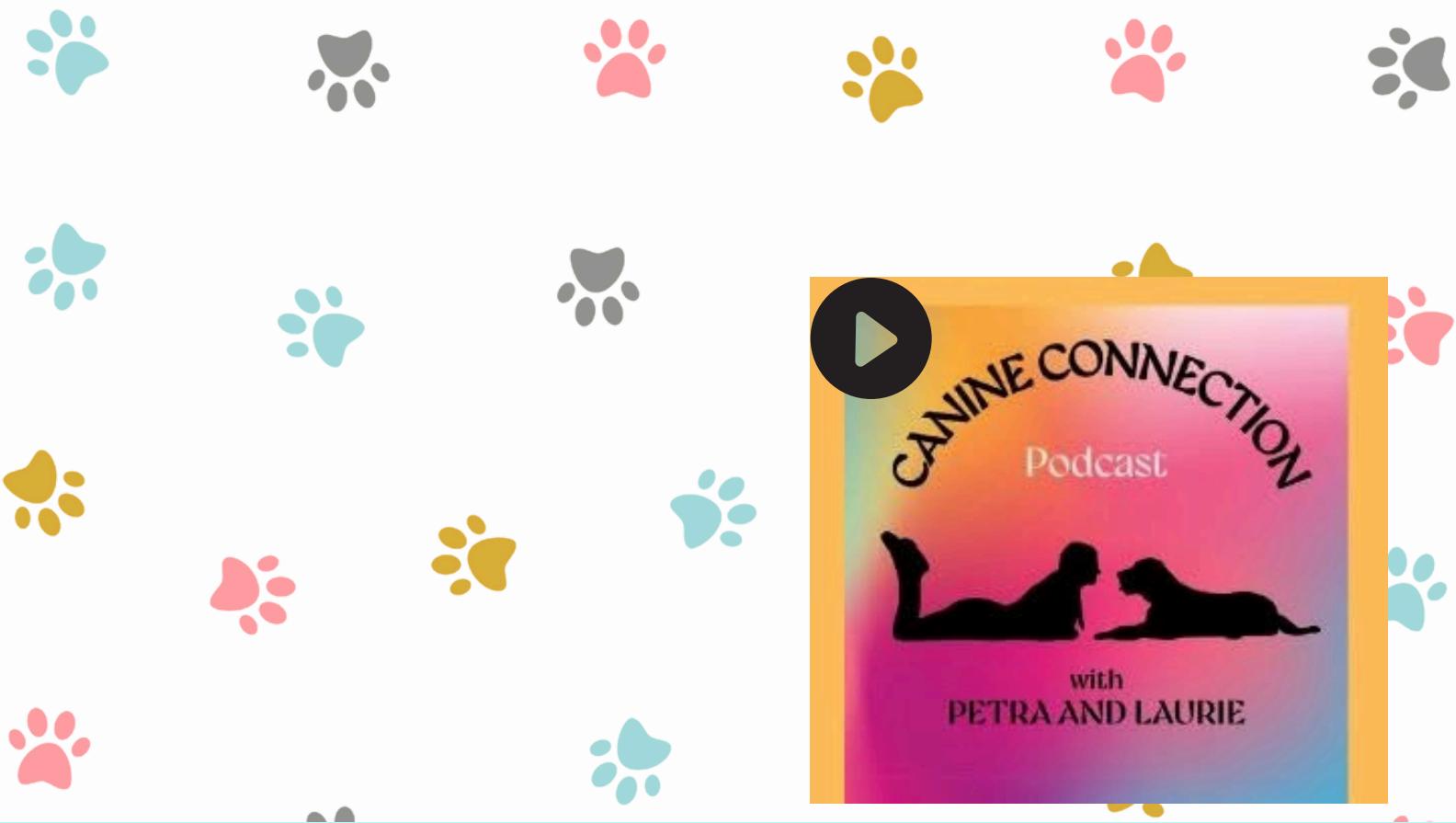


## Podcasts to Check Out

### Random Reflections: Trial Routines

In this episode of the Canine Connection podcast, Petra and Laurie discuss the intricacies of trial day for dog sports, focusing on the superstitions and routines that many handlers adopt to cope with performance anxiety. They explore the importance of having a structured plan, managing stress, and ensuring that both the handler and the dog are mentally prepared for the challenges of competition. The conversation emphasizes the need for acclimation, the significance of focus, and the necessity of bridging the gap between training and trialing to achieve optimal performance.

► Listen now! Click the Image below!





## Featured Sport — Agility

Agility is an exciting and accessible dog sport available today—and Golden Retrievers are wonderfully suited for it. Combining speed, precision, teamwork, and fun, agility challenges dogs to navigate a timed obstacle course that includes jumps, tunnels, weave poles, contact equipment, and more, all while guided by their handler's cues.

Goldens thrive in agility because the sport plays to their natural strengths. Their eagerness to work, intelligence, athleticism, and strong desire to please make them enthusiastic and capable competitors. Whether you're aiming for titles or simply looking for a new activity to enjoy together, agility offers benefits well beyond the ring.

One of the greatest advantages of agility is the bond it builds between dog and handler. Success on course depends on clear communication, trust, and teamwork, strengthening your partnership in a way few activities can. Many handlers find that agility improves their dog's focus, confidence, and responsiveness in everyday life as well.

Agility is also an excellent outlet for both physical and mental energy. The fast pace keeps dogs fit, while the problem-solving aspects of learning courses help prevent boredom and burnout. This can be especially valuable for energetic Goldens who enjoy having a job to do.

Another reason to try agility is its welcoming and supportive community. Clubs and classes are typically encouraging environments where newcomers are guided step-by-step, and dogs of all experience levels are celebrated. You don't need a young puppy or elite athlete to start—agility can be adapted for dogs of varying ages and abilities, with foundations training focusing on safety, body awareness, and confidence.

If you're looking for a sport that challenges you, excites your dog, and strengthens your relationship, agility may be the perfect next adventure for you and your Golden Retriever.





## Year End Awards & Christmas Party — December 2025

### 2025 Dog Awards

- Obedience Dog of the Year – Terra (Linda Wilken)
- Rally Dog of the Year – Ary (Michele Throm)
- Show Dog of the Year – Jeffrey (Elysse Gorney)
- Agility Dog of the Year – Pippa (Nina DePetris)
- Fallchase Owner-Handler Award – Cuvée (Kristin Sipus)
- Gold Standard Award - Cuvée (Kristin Sipus)

### 2025 Member Awards

- Rookie of the Year – Emily Kalil
- Mover and Shaker- Barbara Sheedy
- Above and Beyond – Robin Bowen
- Member of the Year – Lindsey Rodriguez
- Susan Fulenwider Award- Brian Parker





## Let's Brag About it!



Kasey Brooks  
Pumpkin & Butter  
Both achieved their Rally Novice Title at the  
GRCA National



Best of Breed - MidFL GRC Supported entry  
Ocala FL  
Breeder Owner Handled  
Morgan Brooks



Sharon Williams and her dog Zoe and  
earned their Rally Novice in August at  
the Dog Training Club of St. Pete trials.



Barbara Page and Autumn (Mystikal Autumn Joy) completed their AKC Trick Dog Elite Performer title in October.