

A photograph of a person's legs and hands holding a golden retriever in a field. The person is wearing a white short-sleeved shirt, light-colored shorts, and black rubber boots with a yellow 'SHE' logo. The dog is sitting and looking to the right. The background is a blurred field of tall grass and greenery.

Golden Tales

MID-FLORIDA GOLDEN RETRIEVER CLUB

JUNE 2024



In this issue . . .

From the President
Welcome New Club Members
Summer Specialty Show
Inside the Vet's Office
Field Training
Volunteering
New Volunteer Coordinator
Rally/Obedience Trial
The Training Corner
FastCAT
Dock Diving Candids
Heart and Eye Clinic
Training Tidbits
Year End Awards
Spotlight
Conformation Pracatice
Snow Day in Florida?
Birthday Babies
Accolades

Mark Your Calendars

Field Training Day on June 23

Specialty Show on July 6

Obedience and Rally Trials on August 9-11

Dock Diving Fun Day - TBD

COVER: Michelle Throm's Golden girl "Mia"
(Intl CH Cachet's Dare To Dream CD BN RM
RAE JH NAP NJP BCAT CGC TKN CCA WC)

Photo by Jordyn Vanscoy



Have a great summer!



From the President's Desk . . .

June 2024

June is a month to celebrate grads and dads (to humans AND dogs of course!), so I hope everyone has the chance to spend time with their loved ones this month as we kick off summer. As we transition to indoor shows, early morning training sessions while the heat is still manageable, and daily afternoon thunderstorms, I hope you all still have the opportunity to get out there and be involved in events with your dogs. And don't forget to keep yourselves and your dogs cool and well-hydrated during any outdoor activities!

MFGRC has some exciting events planned in the next few months. In July our summer Specialty will be held again at the World Equestrian Center in Ocala. Even if you're not showing, I encourage everyone to come by and watch and enjoy the beautiful venue. Our club is also celebrating its 40th anniversary, as it was founded in 1984! So there will be some extra details at the Specialty to commemorate this milestone. This spring we started meeting weekly in the evenings for conformation handling practice, so we will continue that, but will be switching to mornings to beat the heat and avoid any storms. Our monthly field training days will continue, and in August we have our Obedience and Rally Trials to look forward to in Orlando.

We continue to get great feedback about the heart and eye clinic in May, so we look forward to being able to provide this service to our community for years to come. Health clearances are important for pets as well as show/breeding dogs, so it's great that so many took advantage of the opportunity to attend.

There are lots of opportunities for club members to volunteer at our upcoming events, so please contact our volunteer coordinator to sign up!

Robin Burket

Welcome New Club Members!

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club welcomed new members during its general meetings held in April and May.

New April Memberships

Lynn Laing
WeekiWachee, FL
Sponsored by Robin Bowen

Elizabeth Mound
Sorrento FL
Sponsored by Jan Paddock, Ann Rowe and
Kristen Sipus

Carol & Michael Fitzsimmons
Jacksonville FL
Sponsored by Susan Howard



New May Memberships

Reggie Correll
Ormond Beach FL
Sponsored by Johann Goines

Frank and Jamie Leatherbury
Fairhope AL
Sponsored by Pat Kopco and
Kristin Sipus

Joseph Hellebrand
Melbourne FL
Sponsored by Michelle Hellebrand and
Dee Davis

Gene Lopez
Sanibel FL
Sponsored by Camile Nasca

Objectives of the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club

To encourage and promote the purebred Golden Retriever; and to do all possible to bring their natural qualities to perfection. To urge members and breeders to accept the standard of the breed as approved by the American Kennel Club as the only Standard of Excellence by which Golden Retrievers shall be judged; and to do all in its power to protect and advance the interests of the breed by encouraging sportsmanlike competition at dog shows, obedience trials, and field events.

ESTABLISHED 1984

Find us online at: WWW.MFGRC.ORG





Mid Florida Golden Retriever Club
Summer Specialty Show
Sweepstakes and Veteran Sweepstakes
Concurrent with the Citrus County Kennel Club All Breed Show

Saturday – July 6, 2024
World Equestrian Center – Ocala FL

JUDGES

Mr. Roberto Velez-Pico
San Juan, PR 00908
**BREED CLASSES AND
BEST OWNER-HANDLED**

Ms. Lucinda Napoli
Jacksonville, FL 32210
**JUNIOR SHOWMANSHIP
COMPETITION**

Ms. Margie Sarkin
Eatonton, GA 31024
**SWEEPSTAKES & VETERAN
SWEEPSTAKES CLASSES**

*Whether you are entered or not, come join the
fun and help us commemorate our
40th Anniversary!
This is a beautiful venue to enjoy!
See you there!*



Inside the Vet's Office . . .

By Pamela E. Ginn DVM, Diplomate American College of Veterinary Pathologists
Professor Emeritus, Department of Comparative, Diagnostic and Population Medicine
College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida

Editor's note – Pamela is a MFGRC Board Member and has graciously offered to submit articles of interest to our newsletter.

LYME DISEASE

Lyme disease, also referred to as Lyme borreliosis is a tick-borne disease caused by *Borrelia burgdorferi*, and a few other species of *Borrelia* bacterial organisms classified as spirochetes (spiral shaped). Infection with *Borrelia burgdorferi* occurs in many mammals, birds and in humans.

Lyme disease is the most common vector borne disease reported in dogs and humans in the US. The disease is considered multisystemic as infection with this organism can affect many organs and body systems including joints (arthritis), the heart (myocarditis), kidneys (nephritis), brain (encephalitis) and sometimes the eyes (ophthalmitis). Fortunately, most infections do not lead to clinical disease. The host inflammatory response to infection determines if infection will cause clinical disease. A robust inflammatory response can lead to clinical signs.

Infection is transmitted when an animal is bitten by *Borrelia sp.* infected variety of *Ixodes sp.* ticks. These ticks are widespread in the northeastern United States, upper Midwest and the pacific coast. The disease is endemic in these areas. This tick-borne disease is spreading across the US due to the movement of animals harboring ticks and/or infected hosts. Infected adult ticks feeding on a dog for an extended period is thought to be necessary for infection while bites from infected nymph stage are thought to be the most likely source of infection in man. Many dogs in endemic areas have some antibodies to *B. burgdorferi* (seropositive) but are asymptomatic.

The most common clinical sign of Borreliosis in dogs is intermittent lameness and due to arthritis affecting one or more joints. Joints are swollen with excess synovial fluid and many white blood cells (usually neutrophils). Affected dogs are also often not eating, lethargic and febrile. Most have enlarged peripheral lymph nodes that are palpable. There are no consistent biochemical or hematologic blood changes that can be used to prove a specific diagnosis of Lyme disease. A more severe and sometimes fatal form of the disease is a rapid onset of inflammation of a specific part of the nephrons in the kidney- the glomerulus which is where all the blood of the body is routinely filtered through small vessels. This severe form of Lyme disease is called glomerulonephritis. Damage to the glomeruli leads to loss of vital proteins in the urine and loss of nephrons responsible for forming urine and ridding the body of waste products.



This form of the disease is rare but most commonly affects large breed dogs including labrador retrievers, golden retrievers, and Shetland sheep dogs. A urinalysis to check for protein loss and other changes is recommended for dogs suspected of having been infected with *Borrelia sp.* organisms.

Diagnosis of Lyme disease is usually made based on clinical signs, evaluation of serologic testing, and a history of tick exposure. Tests are widely available at veterinary clinics and provide rapid reliable results. Antibody levels can be quantified. Interpretation of serological tests can be complicated as most dogs in endemic areas that have been exposed to ticks have serological evidence of infection that may be current or from past infection. Seropositivity in conjunction clinical signs calls for treatment. Seropositivity does not predict whether the dog will develop clinical signs/disease, but it is a starting point that may call for follow up testing or further evaluation such as a urinalysis. Organisms are not visible microscopically in tissues submitted for histopathology using routine tissue stains. The organisms can be detected in tissues when highlighted with a special labeling technique called immune-histochemistry. In addition, tissue samples such as synovial membrane from an affected joint can be analyzed by PCR to find *B. Burgdorferi* DNA. Fortunately, treatment with doxycycline or other specific antibiotics leads to rapid improvement in dogs with lameness and myalgia. It is important to continue treatment for the recommended period-usually 4 weeks. Recovery does not confer immunity and dogs can be infected repeatedly.

Lyme disease prevention in dogs includes limiting exposure to tick infested areas and using systemic tick infection preventatives that kill attached adult ticks. Vaccination of at-risk dogs and topical tick preventatives should also be considered. The currently available vaccine prevents *Borrelia sp.* spirochetes from leaving an infected tick's digestive system thereby preventing transmission when the tick feeds on the dog. ■



FIELD TRAINING

Sunday ★ June 23rd, 2024 ★ starting at 9:00 am

Persimmon Hollow Farm

29536–29656 CR-42 - Paisley FL 32767

29°00'54"N 81°28'04"W

GPS does not always take you to the correct entrance from the address.
Look for sign or copy coordinates into your GPS or map app.

If you are coming, please email MFGRCfield@gmail.com by **6/21/24** so we can plan our set-ups in advance and include:

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

What to bring:

1. Water for you and your dogs
2. Gloves for handling birds
3. Chair
4. Lunch
5. Bug spray
6. Long line if your dog needs one
7. Your normal training equipment

We will have both land and water set ups for all levels. If you can help set up, please arrive at 8:30 am. We will also need help with clean-up at the end of the day.

Hope to see everyone in the field!

Please email Field training coordinators Kristin Sipus and/or Brian Parker at mfgrcfield@gmail.com for any questions about this event.

Photo by Jordyn Vanscoy

VOLUNTEERING . . .

Opportunities to Volunteer are Upcoming

Field Training Day

Volunteers will be needed at the one day field training being held on June 23rd in Paisley FL. Set up and clean up help is needed. Please arrive by 8:30 a.m. if you will be helping with set up. Contact Kirsten Sumal, volunteer coordinator to sign up at volunteermfgrc@gmail.com.

Obedience/Rally Trial

A three-day Obedience/Rally Trial will be held August 9, 10, and 11 in Orlando FL at the Orlando Dog Training Club training center. Volunteers are needed to work as ring stewards, table stewards and gate stewards. Plus we have a need for timers and scribes for the Rally trial on Friday. No experience? NO PROBLEM. We will provide documents that cover in detail the responsibilities of stewards as well as training during the day. Anyone interested in volunteering is asked to contact volunteer coordinator Kirsten Sumal at volunteermfgrc@gmail.com. Please provide the following information –

- Name
- Email address
- Cell phone number (for coordination only)
- Day and time you can work (full day, am, pm)
- Position/class you would like to work
- Experience level, either as a competitor or a steward

NEW VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR . . .

Hello MFGRC Members,

My name is Kirsten Sumal, and I am going to be your new volunteer coordinator! My goal is to make sure everyone is aware of upcoming events that will need volunteers. If you are a new member, or just looking for a way to get involved, please reach out to me via the volunteer email (volunteermfgrc@gmail.com). I will be keeping track of all volunteer positions available, and also positions taken each year to make sure you are fulfilling the club requirement.

A little about me...I have loved goldens since I was a child, getting my first dog, Brinkley, from Camille Nasca's Mischief Goldens at the age of five. I now have my own boy, Sully, and I plan to begin breeding in the upcoming years. For now, I am so happy to be involved in such a great club offering fun activities for my dog and I to partake in. I am excited to get to know all of you better, so please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any volunteering related questions, or just to say hi! Below I attached a picture of my sweet boy and myself so you can put a face to the name!



Thanks,
Kirsten Sumal
volunteermfgrc@gmail.com



The Mid Florida Golden Retriever Club proudly presents

ALL BREED RALLY/OBEDIENCE TRIAL

August 9-11, 2024 ★ Entries Close Wednesday July 24, 2024

Trial location: Orlando Dog Training Center
6357 All American Blvd – Orlando FL
Indoors - Air Conditioned

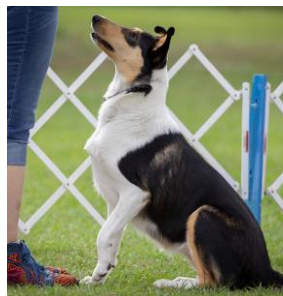
JUDGES:

Leslye Pinnell
Lawrenceville, GA

Cathryn A. Knight
Polk City, FL

Robert H. Knight
Polk City, FL

Carol Mett-Trumbly
Savannah, GA



Exhibitors – enter early!

The Training Corner . . .

By Petra Ford

This article reprinted with permission from Petra Ford

Engagement vs. Attention

Engagement vs. Attention. What's the difference? In the old days we wanted "attention". Basically, we wanted the dogs to look at us. The dogs "paid attention" because they were taught not to look away. But quite often the dog was conflicted. It WANTED to look at something else but knew it shouldn't. The dog's focus was split. Which means their response to the cue was affected. The dog didn't respond, or their response was slow, or they didn't meet the criteria.

Over time I realized I don't want the dog to just "look" at me. We all know that doesn't mean the dog is mentally there. We've all experienced talking to someone that is looking at us but NOT paying attention! We've also been in a situation where the dog is looking at us, we give a cue, but the dog doesn't respond at all. Or performs the wrong behavior, or the behavior doesn't meet the criteria. *Looking does not mean mentally focused.*

When a dog OFFERS engagement (i.e. it's THEIR idea), the dog is fully committed. The environment ceases to exist. The dog is aware of distractions, but they feel good about ignoring them. They know their job! You can't fool them!!

The dog is confident and empowered. Is this easy to achieve? No! Why?? Well, let's be realistic. A dog has different motivations than we do. Much as we love them...and they love us.... that's often not enough. When they see something that reminds them of prey, that may be more valuable to them. For some dogs, nothing is more meaningful than food. Some dogs are enamored of the environment. Others love people or dogs. Some dogs are nervous and insecure. All dogs instinctively orient to smell, motion and sound. It's just how they are wired. We are asking them to ignore everything that makes them feel safe, that's natural for them ... and perform random, meaningless behaviors on cue. It's not impossible, it's just challenging. We need to be empathetic and understand what we are asking. If we do, we will be better trainers.

It's our job to make the work SO REINFORCING that the dog WILLINGLY chooses the work over the environment. Part of that is clarity. Clear, consistent information is highly reinforcing. Part of that is success. Personally, I think making mistakes is an important part of learning. BUT if the mistakes outweigh the successes...well, you wouldn't find that fun either. Success is reinforcing. Success builds confidence. It's VERY important to keep track of the error/success ratio. Many people are not good at this. If your dog makes two errors in a row, it's a red flag. The dog doesn't understand what you are trying to communicate. Rather than continue, change something!! Not sure what to do? Abort...get help, think about it... Doing the same thing over and over expecting to get a different result is the definition of insanity! I remind myself of that often!!

Part of teaching engagement is not overfacing the dog, i.e. don't ask the dog to do something that's too challenging for their current skill level. Humans make assumptions. All the time. THEY think the dog SHOULD be able to do "x" work in "y" environment. That's great. But just because YOU think it, doesn't mean the dog can. Just because the dog can do it at home, doesn't mean the dog can do it at a show n go, or at the park, or at a new training building.

If you are struggling with engagement, it's not because you are a failure, you're not interesting enough, you're not trying hard enough, or your dog doesn't love you. It's because your dog doesn't understand. Let's be clear. Engagement is a TAUGHT skill. We must teach it piece by piece, step by step. We must teach it in environments that have little to no distraction. And slowly over time build on that until the dog can work in busy, challenging environments. Sustained engagement is a skill. We must build it like a muscle. At first the dog can maintain engagement for only a few minutes. Little by little we build mental endurance. Until the dog can maintain active engagement for long periods of time.

(Continued on next page)

Engagement vs. Attention

... continued

As with all taught behaviors, initially we use a very high reinforcement rate. We help the dog. A lot. But as we progress, we need to fade our help. And we need to reduce the amount of reinforcement. Not in every training session. But often enough so the dog can comfortably work without the reinforcer on you.

“If your dog is struggling, there is a hole in your training.”

When I watch dogs at trials, I can tell that most of them understand the exercises. What they are missing is engagement. I can see the frustration and disappointment on the handler’s faces. And I empathize with them. Because getting and maintaining engagement is easily the hardest aspect of dog training.

If your dog is struggling, there is a hole in your training. Your dog doesn’t understand what you want. Maybe you did a great job teaching engagement and your dog has trialed successfully for a while. But suddenly things are falling apart. Why?? Engagement requires constant maintenance. I go back and review fundamentals a lot!! Throughout my dog’s entire career. Just because I taught it, doesn’t mean I’m finished.

Personally, I find nothing as exciting, satisfying and rewarding as working a fully engaged dog. It’s an amazing feeling. We are deeply connected; the dog responds quickly and eagerly to subtle cues. The dog can work comfortably and with full focus in very distracting environments. So exciting! And incredibly rewarding. Achieving this requires patience and, quite literally, years of hard work. Remember, engagement is a skill. It must be taught, just like an exercise. It must be nurtured and fostered and maintained. ***If we don’t have it, we didn’t teach it.***



About Petra Ford . . .

2008-2009 National Obedience Champion
2019 Novice Obedience Classic Winner
2020 National Obedience Champion
+25 years of experience

Petra’s mission is to help dogs and owners communicate more effectively and live more harmoniously—from basic obedience to top level competition obedience training.

Petra graduated from UMDNJ School of Health Related Professions with a degree in physical therapy and has experience working with an extremely varied caseload including pediatric through geriatric clients with a vast range of diagnoses. Her areas of expertise include in-patient rehabilitation, orthopedics and neurology. Petra is also a certified Canine Rehabilitation Therapist, fully certified in Canine Acupressure and is a Reiki Level 2 Practitioner.

Petra’s dogs have earned titles in hunt tests, field trials, agility, and nosework. Her black lab, Tyler, was the 2008 and 2009 National Obedience Champion and First Runner Up in 2010. In 2012, Petra and Tyler became the first and only American team to win the Obedience World Cup (they placed second in 2010). Zaidan competed at the Masters level in agility but is now retired. Zeal has earned his OTCH in obedience, was Second Runner Up at the 2017 National Obedience Championship, has won numerous Regional events and won the prestigious Obedience Classic Tournament in 2017. In 2020 Zeal followed in his Dad’s footsteps and won the National Obedience Championship. This is the first time a father and son have won the National Championship and Petra’s third time earning this title.

Zayna is Petra’s first girl and they are having a blast. Zayna is opinionated, sassy, independent, and often naughty. Never a day goes by that she doesn’t make Petra laugh. Zayna won the Novice Class in the AKC Obedience Classic in 2019. She also competed in her first ever Regional (and it was the first time she competed for three consecutive days) and placed second (behind her brother, Zeal). Zayna is hitting her stride and bringing her attitude and joy to the ring with her. Zayna has earned her OTCH and also received her first invite to the National Obedience Championship.

Petra has written numerous articles on canine conditioning, canine injury prevention, competing with your dog and more. She has been published in a number of magazines including Clean Run, Front and Finish, and Whole Dog Journal. She currently offers webinars and online classes for canine conditioning and competition obedience training. Petra is also an instructor for the Fenzi Dog Sports Academy. She teaches six-week online classes, week-long workshops and presents webinars on a variety of topics.

FastCAT

Think of FastCAT® – which stands for Coursing Ability Test – like measuring a track star’s speed: Dogs run individually in a timed 100-yard dash and in a flash– it’s over before you know it!



FastCAT continues to woo the Golden Retriever crowd! Mother’s Day weekend 2024 was even more special for some local golden retrievers and their special moms. Seven goldens participated in another fun weekend of FastCAT at **Dog Sports Unlimited** in New Smyrna. The fun continued the following weekend too.

Two pups, “Charlie” of Magik Goldens and “Abbey” of Lorelei Goldens earned their DCAT. To achieve the DCAT Title, the dogs had to earn a minimum of 500 points. Points are accumulated by the number of runs as well as how fast each dog runs the course. “Charlie’s” fastest time so far is 8.54, a very quick 23.95mph. Abbey’s fastest time so far is 8.38 seconds, a speedy 24.5 mph!

“Brody”, another Magik Golden, under the expert guidance of his “Dog Father”, Bob, earned his BCAT on May 18th . “Brody’s” fastest time so far is a whopping 8.58, 23.95 mph. To achieve the BCAT, “Brody” had accumulated at least 150 points. What a perfect Mother’s Day gift for mom Ann! Wow!! Congratulations to these three superstars who have found one of their favorite extra-curricular activities.

“Olive” and “Willow”, both of Magik Goldens continued their quest for their DCAT. And for some comic relief, “Olive” had so much fun that she ran the course ... crossed the finish line (thankfully got her time) ... but wasn’t quite done chasing the “bunny”. So she decided to run back to the starting line for even more fun. It was quite a spectacle!

We had a few newbies run their first FastCAT and they loved it! “Sage”, a sprightly senior golden loved running in her first FastCAT competition, sprinting down the course at 11.28, a very quick 18.13 mph. Congratulations to our favorite senior! She will surely be back for more fun!

Another golden who had the best time was “Breeze” of Magik Goldens. This was the first time “Breeze” participated in an official run and she embraced every second of it. She lumbered down the course, looking around as the crowd cheered her on. Bravo Breeze for your beautiful trot to the finish line! (being a “princess” she wanted every move to be a Kodak moment!)

FastCAT is a growing sport for dogs of all breeds, sizes, ages, and shapes. If your dog loves to run, or even stroll, come on out and have some fun! It is a great event to bond with your dog, have some laughs, and meet some wonderful dogs and their pawrents.

Thank you, Charlie, Abbey, Brody, Olive, Willow, Sage, and Breeze for giving your moms a wonderful Mother’s Day!



Donna Hogan’s 9 year old Golden “Sage” enjoys posing after she ran FastCAT at Dog Sports Unlimited in New Smyrna Beach.

From Suzanne Dukes

Lively Dock Diving Candids

Photos from the April Dock Diving Event
Stay tuned for the next Docking Diving Fun Day – Come and enjoy the fun!



Ember



Kiki



Wasabi



Boomer



Sully



Cooper

Photos by Jordyn Vanscoy

MFGRC Hosts Heart and Eye Clinic . . .

Thank you all!!

On Saturday, May 4th, we hosted our annual heart and eye clinic and on Sunday our annual CCA. For the second time we offered our members the opportunity to take part in the GRCA's Breeder Education Seminar. I believe everyone will agree that the weekend was a resounding success with many opportunities to learn more about our breed and our dogs.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our veterinarians Dr. Dennis Brooks and Dr. Maggie Lamy for being a part of our eye clinic and heart clinic. Dr. Brooks examined 104 dogs and was pleased with what he saw. Dr. Lamy performed 29 echocardiograms and 19 auscultations. The participants had wonderful things to say about the doctors. I am very glad to hear that both doctors are very willing to be a part of next year's clinic.

There are so many people to thank for this weekend. I want to start off by giving a huge, heartfelt thank you to Robin Bowen for all that she does for the club but especially for her work this weekend. The CCA is always a highly anticipated event, not in small part because of Robin Bowen's efforts. I want to also offer a personal thank you for her continued support of my efforts in the Heart & Eye clinic. None of this would happen without her.

I also want to take this opportunity to give a huge personal thank you to fellow club members and dear friends John and Ashley Tegg, Sam Hajas and Taylor Desmond, Amanda Fell and Kirsten Sumal. These wonderful people took care of my 4-week-old puppies the entire weekend. Without them I would not have been able to oversee the health clinic and attend the CCA and breeder seminar. I will be forever grateful for their friendship and their expert care of the puppies.

Very special thanks go out to the many club members who volunteered to help with the clinic. Most of them gave up their entire Saturday to ensure that our clinic was well organized. Their friendliness, humor, and concern for the comfort of the dogs and their people are the reasons that we had so many repeat participants from years past.



A huge thank you to Kathy Cudak, Linda Upton, and Susan Graves for running this clinic like a "well-oiled machine". As an aside, Linda and Susan are not club members but have volunteered their time over multiple years. They kept the process of registration, eye drops, scanning, paperwork and exams running so smoothly. Dogs were in and out with barely any effort. The other volunteers who deserve special thanks for being a part of this clinic are Ann Marie Poertner, Maria Randall, Debbie Caudill, Sally Elliott, Kim Pederson & Candi Pearce. I want to thank fellow club member and MADTA President Kevin Barbagallo for allowing us the use of this wonderful facility and his help with setting up the clinic and ensuring that both doctors were comfortable and had everything they needed. Last, but certainly not least, a very special shoutout to Connie and Bob Adams for all their help. Bob kept the heart clinic on track and Connie did the same for the eye clinic and the heart clinic. Not only that, they were also at the facility by 7:30 to help set up and stayed till the very end of the clinic.

One more thank you to Evaluators Linda Williard and Pat Flannigan for mentoring me through the CCA. What an incredible opportunity for me to learn so much about the breed I love dearly from such well-respected members of our community. From the bottom of my heart "thank you."

It is often said that it takes a village, and I am so grateful and so happy to be a part of this MFGRC village. We have the best members, and it is always a pleasure to work with them on our events.

Camille Nasca

Training Tidbits . . .

The Most Underappreciated Tool in Dog Training . . .

By Dr. Ian Dunbar - 2024

One of the saddest things about the state of dog training today is how few people understand how to train their dogs using their voice.

If you know how to talk to your dog the right way, you can make training a dog so much easier and more effective. It might seem like magic but it's simple and it's easy to do, and it's how people trained dogs for thousands of years.

A lot of people these days understand how to use a food lure or a food reward to communicate with a dog. A lot of people even understand how to use a clicker to communicate with their dog.

But what many people don't realize is that your voice can do so many things that a clicker or food treat cannot. Like a clicker, your voice can provide instantaneous reinforcement to let your dog know when they've done something right. But your voice can also let your dog know how well they did. You can vary the intensity of praise to let your dog know if their performance was OK, Good, Great!, *FANTASTIC*, or the **Best You've Ever Seen**, and that information is incredibly valuable for your dog during training.

But that's not all. Your voice can also let your dog know when they are going off-track or doing something inappropriate. And you don't need to yell at your dog or upset them, you can simply tell them "Hey, quit it" in a mildly annoyed tone. Even better, you can give your dog specific instructions about what you want them to do instead. You can say, "Rover, Sit" and now your dog isn't jumping up, or chasing the cat, or lunging at another dog.

All of this is so easy to do with your voice and so few dog trainers and dog owners are using this essential tool to its full potential. ■

***"If you always do
what you've always done,
you'll always get what you always got —
it's time to start thinking differently."***

Eric Swafford

Note to self . . .

Know the Rules

By John Cox, AKC obedience judge

We all have different goals in obedience, but the most common goal I would venture to say is to qualify and do the best we can for those few minutes we have in the ring.

A handler puts in a fair amount of time into training a dog for an obedience title. When that point in training is reached, and the dog has demonstrated success, the handler is now ready to show, **or so they may think**. Yes – the dog may be ready but what about the handler? Have they trained themselves? Have they opened the **AKC Obedience Regulations** to even grasp what is expected in regards to **their job** in the ring? Knowledge is power and such knowledge may save the day. The Regulations do provide a wide range of "wobble room" for the dog and handler to qualify, and knowing those parameters can and will work in one's favor.

Whether you play cards, games, or compete in any sport, it is to your benefit to **know the rules**.



2024 MFGRC Year-End Dog Awards

Once again, the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club will be offering year-end awards in 2024 for members and their dogs who excel in competition in the ring and field.

The MFGRC encourages all members who meet the eligibility requirements to enter and compete for the awards. ***Remember: there is no charge to enter and you can't win if you don't enter!***

MFGRC is offering the following awards for 2024:

- Agility Dog of the Year**
- Field Dog of the Year**
- Hunt Dog of the Year**
- Obedience Dog of the Year**
- Rally Dog of the Year**
- Show Dog of the Year**
- Tracking Dog of the Year**

Versatility Award (calculated by adding points from at least three separate categories)

Fallchase Owner-Handler Award -- recognizing the club's top owner-handler in conformation during the awards year with a perpetual award donated by Fallchase Kennels.

Gold Standard Challenge -- awarded to the owner-handler accumulating the highest points in breed shows and field events during the awards year. Perpetual trophy donated by Kristin Sipus.

New last year was the ***Upland Hunting Dog of the Year Award*** with a perpetual trophy donated by Elizabeth Scherer. Dogs will not earn points toward the Versatility Award by competing in this category.

The club's awards period runs from December 1, 2023, to November 30, 2024. The deadline for entering will be November 30 and awards will be presented at the club's annual Christmas party.

Important: To be eligible for year-end dog awards, a member must have worked one event (minimum of four hours) for the club during the awards period (reduced from previous requirement of two events) or the equivalent behind-the-scenes work (all subject to verification).

Full details for all awards, including additional eligibility requirements, will be included in the official entry form that will be sent to club members over the summer.

Any questions about the MFGRC Year-End Dog Awards can be directed to ninadepetris@att.net

★ SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS! ★



From Pamela Ginn . . .

I am excited to announce that my Golden boy “**Rhett**” (GCH CH Lakewood’s Rhett Butler @ Kestrel Farm South RN MH WCX DDHF CCA) has earned a special Certificate of Merit from the GRCA recognizing his accomplishments as a Grand Champion in the conformation ring and a Master Hunter in the field. He is now one of the few **Dual Dog Hall of Fame Dogs!** In 2022, he received the **Gold Standard Award** from the MFGRC recognizing his conformation and field accomplishments while owner handled in both venues. In 2023 he earned the MFGRC title of **Hunt Test Dog of the Year** for his MH passes. In early 2024 he completed his **Master Hunter and became Master National Qualified**. I must credit the show ring championships to professional handlers. The field titles are the result of consistent hard work and learning on my part and Rhett’s. Rhett is owner trained and handled and he is my first competitive dog. I have many people to thank along the way- Kristin Sipus, Anney Doucette and my training partner Anne Lowry along with many others.

This dog has been a dream come true!



Conformation Handling Practice . . .

Hello club members!

We have been holding our conformation handling practice sessions on Thursday evenings. However, since the temps are heating up for summer, we have shifted our practice sessions to the mornings for the next few months. We will be alternating Monday and Friday mornings to hopefully accommodate more people's schedules.

The first morning sessions will start on Mondays at 8:00 am, and then we'll meet again the following Friday at 8:00 am. Practices will be held at Ann Rowe's home in Sorrento. No prior experience is required, and we are working with all levels of dogs and people. Don't forget to bring water for your dog and a show lead if you have one. Hope to see you there!

Robin Burket

Snow Day in Florida?

Oh – You have a Golden!



Carolyn Cullhane's Golden girl "Butters" (Magik's Pot of Gold) of Mount Dora FL enjoying a brushing that absolutely looks like snow!



Robin Scott and lifetime members Dee Thibodeaux and Ann Rowe were out for a mid-day brunch surely discussing all things dogs – Golden dogs!

Happy Birthday Babies!

The second annual birthday party for the “Harry Potter” litter was hosted by club members Ann Rowe and Betty Lambert at Ann Rowe’s home in Sorrento FL. Golden pups look like they were having a grand time!



Hank



Arson, Olive, & Hank



Poppy, Charlie, Arson, Olive, Hank, & Willow



Elizabeth Scherer's 11 month old Golden boy puppy "Nalu" (Madileau's Marscher Gone Surfing DJ TKN) earned his Dock Diving Junior title in April at the Fort Lauderdale Dog Club event in Palm Beach.

ACCOLADES



Debbie Finch's Golden girl "Abbey" (Loralei's Abbey Road) earned her BCAT title in FastCAT at Dog Sports Unlimited in New Smyrna Beach in February.



Betty Lambert's Golden boy Charlie earned his DCAT title in Fast CAT at Dog Sports Unlimited in New Smyrna Beach on Mother's Day. Charlie is now Magik's Goblet Of Fire FDC DCAT DN DJX CGCA TKN ATT CCA

MORE ACCOLADES . . .



Golden boy "Winston" had another great weekend with good size classes at the ODTC trial in April - he finished his OTCH13 plus came away with 3x High In Trials and 2x High Combined awards and 40 OTCH points. Golden boy "Flyte" made a super debut into Utility - Saturday morning he earned his first Preferred Utility leg, and Sunday morning he earned his first regular Utility leg out of the Utility B class.



MFGRC had a nice representation at the IABC International Shows in Brooksville. Golden girl "Willow" owned by member Donna Hogan and bred by Betty Lambert and Anne Rowe earned her Honors Champion Bronze title. Golden boy "Gator" owned by member Denise Titus and bred by Michele Panetta also earned his Honors Champion Bronze. They competed in a special group of dogs that earned the Honors Champion title that weekend and Willow took Bronze and Gator took Silver.



Ann and Bob Rowe's Golden boy "Brody" earned his BCAT title in FastCAT at Dog Sports Unlimited in New Smyrna Beach in May.



Debbie Finch's Golden girl "Abbey" (Loralei's Abbey Road) earned her DCAT title in FastCAT at Dog Sports Unlimited in New Smyrna Beach.



Connie Adams' Golden boy "Luke" (UR01 BN Liebchen's-Windsor Skywalker Luke, CD,RI,SWN,SIA,CGCU,TKN,CCA) attended the UKC Scent Work Trials held at MADTA on April 6-7. He qualified in Containers and Interiors at both trials on the first day earning him two titles and then on day two he qualified in both trials in Vehicles earning him that title.

Linda Smith's Golden boy "Gryphon," (HR Gryphon Flying Lion Dream SH CD CCA CGCA CGCU CAT DCAT TKI DEA WCX) earned his Dock Elite Excellent title in Brooksville and his invite to Regional Championship. His personal best jump is 28 feet!

