

Golden Tales

SEPTEMBER 2023



MID-FLORIDA GOLDEN RETRIEVER CLUB



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Photo by Jordyn Vanscoy

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10/12 General Meeting- Zoom @7:00pm

10/14 Dock Diving Fun Day- Central Florida K9 (Eustis)

10/15 Field Training Day (Paisley)

10/21 WC/WCX- Persimmon Hollow Farm (Paisley)

11/11 General Meeting with potluck- Ocala Show (after goldens)

11/12 Field Training Day (Paisley)

11/17-11/19 Hunt Test- (Monteverde)

12/3 Board Meeting- Zoom @6:00pm

12/15 December Specialty- OCCC (Orlando)

12/16 Christmas Party and General Meeting- location TBD

Cover Photo by Jordyn Vanscoy

From the President's Desk . . .

September 2023

As we wrap up August and head into September, we can reflect on a very successful summer for the MFGRC. Our Summer Specialty took place for the first time at the World Equestrian Center in July, and we all enjoyed the venue. The show was a great success thanks to show chair Caroline Kendrick and trophy chair Michele Panetta. Then in August, the club's annual Obedience and Rally Trial was held in Daytona. This was longtime club member and former secretary Andy Hall's last year chairing the event. He has always gone above and beyond in everything he's done for MFGRC, and with the help of hospitality chair Barbara Hall, he organized another wonderful event for our club. We will continue the trial next year with a new chair and location!

Also in August, we held an obedience seminar at MADTA as part of our new Volunteer Rewards Program. The seminar was free for all club members, and those who have volunteered for the club in the past year were able to earn a working spot to get some hands-on experience with their dog. We can't wait to offer seminars for other venues of competition, so stay tuned for updates!

With September comes the National Specialty, and the MFGRC would like to wish good luck and safe travels to everyone competing in Oregon this year.

The MFGRC has some exciting events to look forward to in the next few months. Make sure you sign up for our dock diving fun day on October 14th at Central Florida K9 in Eustis. The club will also be hosting a WC/WCX on October 21st at Brian Parker's property in Paisley. I hope we can enjoy a beautiful fall, and I'm keeping my fingers crossed for some lovely cooler weather in the coming season.

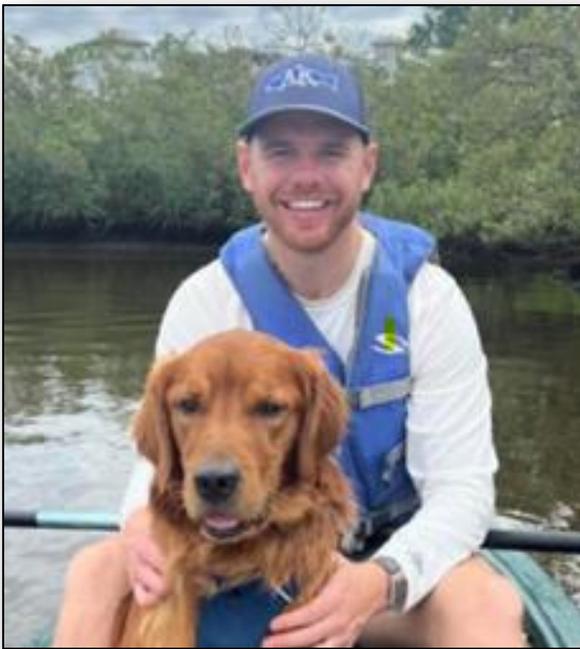
Robin Burket



Welcome New Club Members!

The Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club welcomed new members during its general meeting held in June.

Ryan Dewitt from Tampa, FL (Sponsor was Nancy Cameron & Kristin Sipus)
Kitty Forguson from New Smyrna Beach, FL (Sponsor was Karyn Angel)
Mona Pent from Hutchinson Island, FL (Sponsor was Anney Doucette & Kristin Sipus)
Chris & Gloria Boltin from Dunnellon, FL (Sponsor was Kristin Sipus.)



Ryan Dewitt



Kitty Forguson

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



Obedience and Rally Trials 2023 . . .

*Thanks to All for MFGRC Obedience & Rally Trial
From Andy Hall*

As chair of the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club Obedience and Rally Trial, I would like to thank everyone involved who helped make this year's event come together and run so well on August 11-12-13 in Daytona Beach.

The Obedience Club of Daytona, as always, gave us a fantastic facility with everything needed to run a trial. Everyone associated with the OCOD was great to work with.

Many MFGRC members volunteered their time to serve as ring or table stewards during the three days of competition, including some who jumped in at the last minute when others had to cancel. Our judges were highly complimentary of our stewards and how well they did their jobs – and some were doing it for the first time and quickly became great at it! They included MFGRC members Bob Adams, Butch Albano, Robin Burket, Amanda Fell, Debbie Finch, Kitty Ferguson, Susan Howard, Chris Jeffrey, Christine McDaniel, D'Nette Musser, Camille Nasca, Michele Panetta, Cindy Patz, Cynthia Rothman, Ann Rowe, Dalia Ruffatto, Vickie Schroeder, Susan Sherman, Jack Torielli, Jordyn Vanscoy and Joe and Diane Wolak. Thanks to all!

MFGRC/OCOD member Maria Orlando spent a day cleaning the building on Wednesday of trial week and her husband Ralph Orlando was a big help to me in the months and weeks leading up to the event.

Special thanks to MFGRC members Camille Nasca and Joyce Swegle for staying late on Sunday to help clean and re-set the building (including vacuuming up lots of dog fur). OCOD member Renee Johnson also helped with the re-set of the building and cleaning. They did a superb job and the building was sparkling when we left.

Also special thanks to MFGRC member Vickie Schroeder for helping me on setup day. It was great to have an extra pair of hands.

Also helping as stewards during the trial and deserving of thanks were OCOD members Janet Berry, Kris Davenport, Susan Handy and Claire Israelson. And additional thanks to OCOD member Nancy Miles who by herself set up the two Rally rings on Thursday morning and got the signs, holders and other materials ready for Friday's Rally trials. She also stayed late after the Rally trials and helped set up the rings for Saturday's Obedience trials.



MFGRC members also contributed to the success of the trial in other ways: thanks to Chris Jeffrey and Robin Bowen for assembling rosettes in advance of the event. And Robin Bowen, our club treasurer, also was great to work with on the financial aspects of the trial.

Our judges were fantastic: Susan Emerson, Carol Ann Klein, Carol Mett-Trembly and Norine Noonan. Also thanks to our trial secretary Adrienne Swanick.

My wife Barbara Hall was a tremendous help to me during the months leading up to the event and on that weekend. As hospitality chair, she took care of lunches for judges and stewards and added some nice touches including snacks and some homemade cookies. She also ironed our rosettes to make them look perfect.

And thanks to the members of the MFGRC board for supporting me as trial chair with whatever was needed.

This was my final year as chair of the event, a position I began with the 2017 trial (which was canceled due to the dog flu). I thoroughly enjoyed the job, the trials and the people involved and I know that my successors will do a fantastic job. Best wishes to them and to the MFGRC and its members with this trial going forward.

Sincerely,

Andy Hall

Obedience/Rally Chair

Obedience Seminar . . .

*MFGRC had the first of its **Member Appreciation Seminars** on Saturday, August 19 at MADTA in Ocala*

There were 20 attendees for the AM session (which was for Beginner Novice, Novice dogs). Sally Sherman did a fabulous job explaining the world of AKC obedience. Handouts were given outlining how to enter a trial, and judges scoresheets were shared. A Beginner Novice course as well as a Novice course were available to run through after an 'example dog' (thank you Connie and Luke!) did the course, and the potential judging was shared with the crowd. Exercises were things like sitting in circle with dogs at front, in sit, and learning eye contact with judicious use of treats.

The PM session had 15 in attendance and that session was for Open and Utility dogs. The afternoon was geared more towards working exercises and problem solving. Handouts were given for this session as well.

We started doing heeling with distractions, using a participant to create a distraction for each working pair. Figure 8 footwork was practiced with and without dogs and much chalk was used to create targets for properly placed feet! Learning to do treating through left elbow was demonstrated to keep dog in heel (photo), sizing sit platforms (ideal seemed to be 10x18"), homemade cavaletti made of cones and yard stakes to adjust stride (for indoor conditioning in this heat- our dogs are athletes and need to be in condition) and a myriad of other nifty training tricks, tools, and conditioning exercises.

It was wonderful to see so many new competition members in the morning and so many pros in the afternoon! As always, the MADTA facility is a wonderful site, and thank you to those who helped set up and break down/clean after the event. We can't wait to see each and every one of you in the ring with your Golden, earning those titles Golden Retrievers are so good at getting! Thank you to Susan Howard who assisted Sally Sherman- you two are a great team!

Robin Bowen



Remembering Tom Hell . . .

Tom Hell was a beloved member of the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club for 30 years. We will all miss his unforgettable “Top of the Morning” greeting. Please keep his wife Joanne and Tom’s family in your prayers.

Tom Hell was a beloved member of the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club for 30 years. We will all miss his unforgettable “*Top of the Morning*” greeting. Please keep his wife Joanne and Tom’s family in your prayers. On Wednesday, July 5, 2023, Tom Hell of Lakeland, Florida passed away peacefully at his home surrounded by family following a long battle with cancer, at the age of 76.

Tom was born on June 9, 1947, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to James C. and Lucille J. (nee Link) Hell. He graduated from East Troy High School in 1965 and following graduation enlisted in the U.S. Army serving 6 years in the Wisconsin National Guard.

He moved to St. Petersburg, Florida in 1975 where he worked in sales. He then owned and operated the Fly-N-Inn bar and grill in Clearwater, Florida for many years. There he met and married Joanne G. Hallstein on December 29, 1985. They, along with Fred Watrous, became real estate investors throughout Western and Central Florida. Their partnership and friendship have lasted more than 31 years.

Tom and Joanne bred (blonde) golden retriever puppies for loving families throughout Florida. He enjoyed training his dogs and competing in hunt tests regularly. His current trusted friend and hunting companion, Porter, earned his HRCH title in 2022 and his MH title in 2023. Tom was very active in the Mid Florida Golden Retriever Club and Central Florida Hunting Retriever Club. He served as a long-time club Treasurer and board member for those organizations. He was also Treasurer for the Lakeland Winter Haven Kennel Club and was the Vendor Chairman for four Golden Retriever National Specialties. Tom acquired many cherished friendships within the dog community that he loved.



After retirement Tom enjoyed many years of RVing around the country with Joanne and good friends.

Tom was preceded in death by his parents James C. and Lucille J. Hell; grandparents Joseph and Clara (nee Hoerres) Link and Francis and Viola (nee Kreisch) Pottner; and a sister-in-law, Margaret A. Hell. He is survived by his wife, Joanne, “Kids” Peaches, Porter, Camo and Vader. He is further survived by a sister, Terry; brothers Jim, and John (Sandy); nieces: Kari, Kelsey (Tommy) and nephews: Mark, Chad (Cybil), Cody, Jess (Brooke), and Tim (Jennifer); and many other grand nieces and nephews. A celebration of Tom’s life is being planned for a future date in both Florida and Wisconsin for family and friends. In lieu of flowers the family requests memorial donations can be sent to Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida (GRRMF) at: <https://www.grrmf.org/donate/>

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.

Mast Tumors in Dogs

What is a mast cell?

Mast cells are found in most areas of the body (except the brain) and are especially numerous in the skin, lungs, and gastrointestinal tract. Mast cells feature large numbers of granules containing mediators of inflammation such as heparin and histamine. Mast cells release the contents of these granules into the surrounding tissues during various types of tissue injury. Mast cells are part of the normal and immediate immune response. The activation of mast cells and granule release leads to leaky vessels and attraction of white blood cells to fight infection and initiate tissue repair. Excessive or unwanted triggering of mast cell granule release results in allergic or hypersensitivity responses. Mast cell activation can lead to local swelling and inflammation or widespread life-threatening reactions such as anaphylaxis.

How common are mast cell tumors in dogs?

Mast cells can proliferate in an uncontrolled manner leading to tumor formation. Mast cell tumors are the most common tumor occurring in the skin of dogs. Mast cell tumors behave differently in different species and information here only pertains to the dog. In dogs, mast cell tumors are always considered to be cancerous (malignant) but vary from easily cured by local excision or life threatening due to local and distant spread (metastasis).



Photo of mast cell tumor on a dog's paw

How are mast cell tumors diagnosed?

Mast cell tumors can occur anywhere in the body, including the oral cavity. There is no way to look at a lump on a dog and know it is a mast cell tumor as they can present as soft or hard, hairless or haired, ulcerated or not, asymptomatic or itchy and red. They can mimic just about any other type of skin tumor. Your veterinarian should be able to perform a needle aspirate of the mass and look at the cells under the microscope to make the diagnosis. This is preferred over immediate excision as mast cell tumors can release granules during surgical manipulation. Medication is given prior to surgery to prevent a severe allergic type of reaction while the dog is in surgery. Fortunately, mast cells are one of the most easily diagnosed tumors with cytology. The cells are easily aspirated, and the granulated cells are readily recognized under the microscope. Knowing the mass is a mast cell tumor also lets the surgeon know that the tumor should be removed with wide margins of normal appearing tissue.

How can your veterinarian provide a prognosis for your dog with a mast cell tumor?

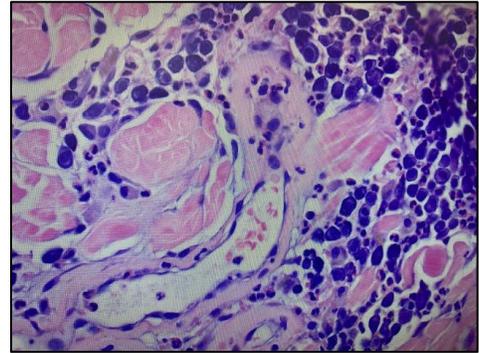
Mast cell tumors in dogs are probably one of the most studied types of tumors in the dog because no method of determining the behavior of an individual mast cell tumor has ever been shown to be completely reliable. The good news is, however, veterinarians have compiled extensive information from studying these tumors and can provide a fairly accurate prognosis and treatment recommendations based on histopathology and other information made available. The tissue should be submitted for histopathological analysis (biopsy). This analysis is crucial to determine what potential danger the tumor poses to your dog and what if any further analysis or treatment is recommended. The pathologist will determine if the surgical excision was complete and if the margins are free of tumor cells.

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Inside the Vet's Office . . . *continued*

The pathologist will also *grade* the tumor. Grading the tumor is based on the location of the tumor within the tissue (such as what layer of the skin contains the tumor) and the characteristics of the tumor cells. Do the tumor cells look like normal mast cells or have they become hard to recognize? Are there mitotic figures present indicating rapid expansion of the population? Are the tumor cells infiltrating the surrounding areas? These are some of the criteria the pathologist uses to grade the tumor when evaluating a mast cell tumor biopsy.

There are two different grading methods currently in use and each basically determines whether the tumor is low grade (most likely cured by complete excision, not likely to be aggressive) or high grade (aggressive, likely life-threatening, additional treatment needed). One grading method includes an intermediate grade (difficult to predict behavior). Depending on the results, the pathologist or your veterinarian may recommend a Mast Cell Prognostic Panel that uses the tissue already submitted. The panel analyses the tumor cells for genetic mutations, degree of tumor cell proliferation and tumor cell expression of abnormal proteins. The results of this additional analysis can help with refining the prognosis and can direct specific treatments. In some cases your veterinarian may recommend *staging* the tumor, in other words determining how far the tumor has spread in the dog's body. This may involve lymph node aspiration or biopsy, examination of blood and other procedures.



This is a photo micrograph of a mast cell tumor in a dog. The mast cells are filled with purple granules.

How are mast cell tumors treated in dogs?

The first line of treatment is removal with wide margins if possible. In case of a low grade mast tumor, that may be all that is needed. In other cases, medications may be given to shrink inoperable tumors, radiation treatment may be recommended or specific targeted chemotherapy based on the characteristics of your dog's tumor may be recommended. New treatments are evolving and hopefully over time, dependable medical treatments will become common place. ■

VOLUNTEERING . . .

Opportunities to Volunteer are Upcoming



Looking for some volunteer hours for the club? We have lots of tasks that happen behind the scenes and are always in need of help. If you need volunteer hours for year-end awards or just want to learn more about some of our events, here are a few examples of ways to volunteer:

- Dock diving fun day in October. We are looking for experienced dock diving handlers to help the day of the event.
- Want to learn more about Field events? We have the WC/WCX on October 21 or the Hunt Trial November 17th -19th.
- Our Specialty is coming up in December, Help is needed with inventory of ribbons or trophies.

So if interested, please reach out to our club secretary Jenny Ford at jenny.ford2488@gmail.com to find out more information.



TRAINING DAYS

OCTOBER 15

NOVEMBER 12

Email MFGRCfield@gmail.com to sign up

Make a note!



Club Field Training Day

Learn, Love, Laugh

By Cindy Patz

Photos by Jordyn Vanscoy

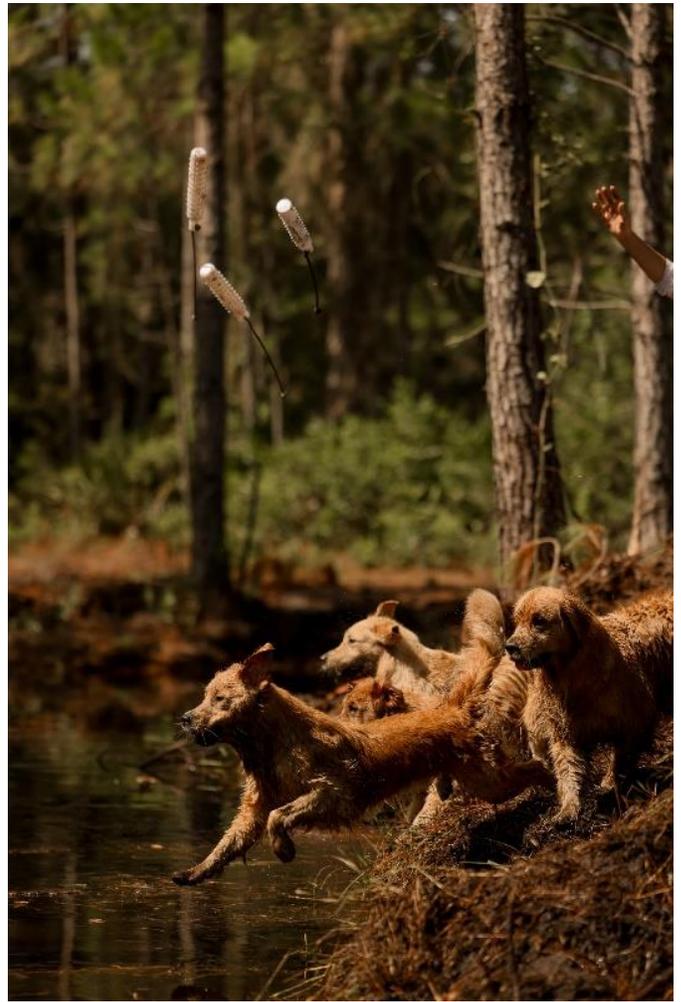


We had all levels of dogs at August's training day from experienced dogs and handlers that will be running master tests this fall to puppies just learning to get into a pond. And just when I thought I had seen all the best areas to train, Brian Parker leads us back in a caravan to a picturesque pond that afforded us so many options for training. Our lead trainers, Kristin and Brian, set up a nice triple with two water blinds that could be easily modified for whatever each dog/handler combination needed. Having these opportunities to run marks like this with experienced trainers there to learn from is invaluable to advancing your dog (personally, I had a few things pointed out that I didn't even realize I was doing!).

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Field Training Day continued ...

One of the things I love about group training is that everyone there genuinely wants you to succeed and goes out of their way to help from throwing bumpers at just the right time to keep that young dog swimming confidently to bringing extra water to offer to others. When it was time for the puppies to learn to jump in a pond and retrieve a bumper, Kristin was in the water with them encouraging them and she was always the loudest cheerleader when they succeeded. She may have had her water boots on, but I know she ended up with water sloshing in those boots for the rest of the day. And our youngest puppy, Dram, swam out to retrieve the big boy marks like a champ. What's not to love about that!



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Field Training Day continued ...



The icing on the cake was we had our own club photographer catching every moment! New club member, Jordyn Leigh, sat behind a holding blind in the sun and steadfastly captured every dog/handler combination in training. When it was her turn to run, Courtney Roxby joyfully took her place behind the blind to make sure no one was left out. Thank you both! What's the first rule of training? If you're not having fun, you're doing it wrong and every time I leave the property, Brian asks the same thing, "Did you have fun?". And every time, I laugh a little, knowing my dirty shirt smells like a weird mix of pond, sunscreen and bug spray, but I always say **yes!**

- Cindy Patz



Did you have fun? Yes!

MACH Morningstar Burlington Bertie

February 7, 2009 – August 2, 2023



Joyful, enthusiastic, eager to learn any new skill and try any challenge put before him, Bertie typified the Golden Retriever spirit. He never let his serious health issues keep him from participating in his favorite sports and games. He earned titles and legs in venues like obedience, dock diving, and lure coursing, and enjoyed demonstrating the trickier maneuvers during agility classes he helped his mom instruct.

Bertie won a coveted spot in the Golden Retriever Agility Hall of Fame, and received a third place rosette as a veteran in our national competition in Ocala, looking splendid in his first-ever experience in the conformation ring.

He made lifelong friends – canine and human – here in Florida and during annual RV trips to trials and vacations in the Colorado Rockies and beyond. Most of all, Bertie was our heart dog, love in a furry coat, smart and funny and affectionate. Michael and I are so grateful to have had him in our lives.

Coralee Leon

The Training Corner . . .

The Unforced Forced Fetch-NePoPo® Style

When a dog believes the behavior was their idea - that is when they do it with heart and soul...

By **Christopher Armanini**

Full Send K9, Loxahatchee, Florida

NePoPo® Gold School Graduate

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@fullsendk9training

In the world of dog training, the term "Forced Fetch" often triggers a negative response, evoking concerns about harsh methods and unnecessary pressure on our furry companions. However, as a seasoned dog trainer, I've come to understand that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to teaching our canine friends new skills. Each dog is unique, and their learning process may vary widely. As responsible trainers, it is essential to have a diverse range of techniques at our disposal, enabling us to tailor our methods to suit individual dogs and their specific needs. In this pursuit, I have discovered a comprehensive and thoughtful approach called the NePoPo® unforced forced fetch, which breaks down the process into micro-components, setting the stage for a positive and successful training experience. By fostering engagement, understanding, and collaboration with our dogs, we aim to create a profound connection that inspires them to perform every task with genuine heart and soul.



First, let's think about what we want our dogs to do: On command grasp any object we specify with their mouth, and maintain a firm hold on it until we give the cue to release it or deliver it directly to our hand. This multi-step process involves teaching them the retrieve, hold, and out commands, enabling them to perform the task with precision and reliability.

The initial step in the training process involves charging the dog on a clicker or marker word. In my case, I use the word "yes" as the marker, considering that my hands will be extensively involved throughout the training.

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"Through patience, consistency, and a thoughtful approach, this training system nurtures a confident and reliable retriever, capable of performing the fetch command with enthusiasm and precision."

“Fetch” continued . . .

To create an optimal training environment, it is essential to have a training isolation table, bench, or wall where the dog can be back-tied, preferably at waist height. The advantage of using a table with sides is that it restricts the dog's energy and focus, ensuring a captive and attentive audience for the training sessions. This controlled setting helps to lay the foundation for effective learning and focused engagement.

After establishing the training area with the isolation table, the next crucial step is to acclimate the dog to this environment. It is essential to allow the dog to familiarize itself with the table and feel at ease in the training setting.

With the dog securely back-tied to a flat collar on the table, we encourage the dog to initiate the training process actively. Our goal is to create an "ACTIVE dog REACTIVE trainer" dynamic. In other words, we seek behavior from the dog that shows eagerness and enthusiasm, as if it is asking to participate in the training session. We look for signs of engagement and readiness from the dog, such as standing up, moving toward the edge of the table, and making eye contact with us. This behavior communicates the dog's interest in training and its desire to be involved in the learning process.



When we observe these proactive behaviors from the dog, we know it is ready and eager to start the training "game." It is this activity and initiative from the dog that draws us in, prompting us to begin the training session. By encouraging the dog's enthusiasm and receptiveness, we create a positive and interactive training environment that fosters an eager and cooperative learning attitude.

In the initial stages of the training process, our primary focus is to teach the dog to lay its muzzle into our open hand. We present the open hand in front of the dog and encourage it to place its muzzle directly into the hand. When the dog successfully performs this action, we promptly mark the behavior with a "yes."

Once the dog removes its muzzle from our hand to retrieve the reward, we reach for the reward from our pouch. It is crucial to note that we want the dog to remove its muzzle from our hand first, and then we reward it. This sequence is essential for shaping the "out" command, which will become clearer later in the training process.

If the dog does not immediately place its muzzle in our open hand, we use successful approximation. In other words, we mark and reinforce the behavior gradually until the dog consistently lays its muzzle in our hand. It is essential to avoid putting our hand directly under the dog's muzzle and marking the behavior. Instead, we want the dog to reach out actively and place its muzzle in our hand. This approach effectively shapes the behavior of retrieving an object and will be instrumental in later stages of the training.

Once the dog consistently lays its muzzle in our hand, we progress to building duration for the behavior. Our aim is to train the dog to maintain its muzzle in our hand until mark with a "yes." This is shaping the hold. We start by asking for a brief duration of one second, then gradually increase it to two seconds, then three, and so on. The key is to incrementally extend the duration, ensuring that the dog remains steady and does not remove its muzzle until we provide the marking cue.

As the dog becomes proficient in holding its muzzle for longer periods, we introduce a crucial aspect of the training—proofing the behavior in different hand positions. This step involves placing our hand to the right of the dog's head, then to the left of its head, and in lower positions on the right and left sides. The objective is to ensure that the dog can perform the behavior regardless of the hand's location. This proofing process strengthens the dog's understanding of the command, making the behavior more reliable and adaptable in various scenarios.

If, at any point during the training, the dog becomes disengaged, protests, or removes its muzzle before the marking cue, it is essential to handle the situation with patience and understanding.

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“Fetch” continued . . .

In such instances, it is best to simply step away and avoid any verbal or physical corrections. By doing so, we employ the principle of negative punishment, where we remove the desired stimulus (our attention and the potential reward) when the dog exhibits undesirable behavior. Stepping away sends a clear message to the dog that its current actions are not meeting our expectations.

The objective is to encourage the dog to re-engage and display the active asking behavior that indicates its willingness to participate in the training. Once the dog checks back in, shows enthusiasm, and actively seeks to work with us again, we can resume the training process from where we left off.

The next stage of the training process involves introducing our second hand over the dog's muzzle while placing it in our open hand, as we did in the previous step. Once the dog accepts the presence of the second hand, we promptly mark the behavior and wait for the dog to remove its muzzle from both of our hands. Then, we reach for the reward to reinforce the behavior.

This step is crucial because we are now shaping both the retrieve and the out commands simultaneously. By reinforcing the dog's acceptance of the second hand and rewarding the release of its muzzle, we reinforce the behavior of retrieving and letting go of the object.

As in previous steps, we continue to build duration by gradually extending the time the dog keeps its muzzle between both our hands. However, if the dog does not accept the second hand or removes itself before the marking cue, it is essential to follow the negative punishment principle by stepping away. We allow the dog to initiate the process again by showing active engagement and asking to continue with the training.

Once the dog becomes steady and consistent in holding its muzzle between both hands, we progress to practicing the behavior in different positions. It is crucial to avoid going directly to the dog; instead, we want the dog to actively reach out and position its muzzle between both hands on its own. This approach reinforces the dog's understanding of the commands and encourages independent and reliable behavior, regardless of the hand's placement.



When the dog displays steady duration with his muzzle between both hands, we move on to the hold. In this step, we introduce the dog to accept our thumb and middle finger of the bottom hand in its mouth, positioned behind the canines. It is essential to ensure that the dog has finished teething before proceeding with this part of the training. Additionally, we must be cautious not to pinch the dog's lips on its teeth.

By having the dog accept our fingers in its mouth, we are able to mark the behavior when it applies steady pressure. The objective is to avoid any chattering or mouthing and instead focus on continuous and steady pressure.

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“Fetch” continued . . .



Throughout this step, we gradually build the duration of the dog's ability to hold steady pressure on our fingers. We mark the behavior when the dog demonstrates consistent pressure application and only reward it when it removes its muzzle from our hands.

Next, we will be combining all of the previous steps utilizing an inanimate object. For this, I like to use a 3" PVC pipe 12" long or a wooden dowel. With the dog on the isolation table, we will present the item we intend the dog to hold. If the dog takes it immediately, great! Mark then reward. The dog will have to drop the item to receive the reward.



If the dog does not immediately take the item, use successful approximation by marking until the dog is grabbing the item from you. Same as in the previous steps, we will want to build duration with the dog holding the item by slowly extending till we mark. Also making sure we are only marking when the dog is applying steady pressure to the item and not jiggling it in their mouth.

Up to this point, we have not named any behaviors. After the dog consistently grabs the presented item from your hand and holds it until the mark, we can start to classically condition names to the predicted behaviors.

The sequence of events will go as follows:

- Dog will be on the isolation table
- Item will be at your side
- You will say fetch, then present the item. If the dog does not immediately grab the item step away (negative punishment). Repeat until the dog grabs the item. Make sure you are giving the command of “fetch” and then presenting the item. Do not give the command and present the item at the same time. When the dog grabs the item, now you will give the drop or out command right before the marker. “Drop-Yes” then reward. Through classical conditioning, drop becomes the verbal cue in anticipation of the reward.

It is important to proof the out. We do not want our hands reaching in for the item to be a gestural cue to drop. Some dogs will see our hand reaching in and drop it prematurely. To do this, I like to vary the way that I retrieve the object. Sometimes I grab the object and say drop, sometimes I reach in but do not grab the object and say drop, and other times I just give the command of drop. The dog must know to hold the item until given the command.

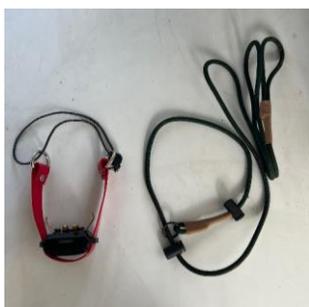


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“Fetch” continued . . .

Everything we have done up to now has been preparation for pressure. We have given the dog the answers to the test. At this point is where we introduce slight discomfort (negative reinforcement) prior to the fetch. I like to utilize a dominant slip lead for this. The dog will be on the isolation table back tied to the flat collar. The dominant slip will be in front of the flat collar with the lead coming from the bottom of the neck to your hand. The opposite hand holds the pipe at your side. Slight discomfort is applied through the slip lead for a second or two. As you let off pressure from the slip lead, the pipe is presented with the “fetch” command.

We are showing the dog that the item he is fetching is relief from pressure. Very important not to pair the pressure with the item at this point. We then continue with the same process of maintaining the hold and the out.



Up until now, the dog has been back-tied on the table. Next, we will need some assistance from another person. I like to put the dog on the back side of the table where the helper is holding a leash attached to the flat collar. The item we want the dog to pick up is on the opposite end of the table closest to the handler. The e-collar will still be on top of the neck. You will be facing the dog from the opposite side of the table, give a tap of the low-level stim then the fetch command. We are looking for the dog to drive forward to the item, pick it up off of the tabletop and present it to us. We then continue with the same standard of holding and outing.



(continued on next page)

“Fetch” continued . . .

At this stage, we have undergone hundreds of repetitions, effectively teaching the dog the desired behaviors and how to turn off the pressure (negative reinforcement) by successfully completing the fetch. Now, it's time to implement the "you must" aspect of the training system.

If, at any point from this stage onward, the dog refuses to fetch the item or drops it before the out command, we apply pressure to ensure compliance. For instance, if the dog is on the table and shows reluctance to fetch the item, we apply pressure through the slip lead and e-collar while stepping away. The pressure serves as positive punishment, urging the dog to take action. When the dog finally takes possession of the item, the pressure is released.

Similarly, if the dog drops the item before the drop command, we maintain pressure through the slip lead and e-collar while retrieving the item from the ground. As soon as the dog regains possession of the item, we release the pressure.

Throughout this process, we adhere to the same standard of holding and outing as before, providing a consistent and clear framework for the dog to follow.

This "you must" aspect of the training reinforces the importance of completing the fetch task promptly and accurately. By incorporating pressure as a consequence for non-compliance, we reinforce the dog's understanding that performing the desired behavior is essential for a comfortable and positive training experience.

Consistency and patience are key during this phase of training, as we help the dog develop reliability and precision in its behaviors. Through positive reinforcement for successful completion and pressure for non-compliance, we continue to strengthen the dog's grasp of the fetch command and solidify its performance in various scenarios.

Absolutely, this training system takes a comprehensive approach to set the dog up for success in the fetch and retrieve process. By incorporating all four quadrants of operant conditioning—positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, positive punishment, and negative punishment—the dog learns to be accountable for its actions, leading to behaviors that are performed with heart and soul.

By skillfully combining these four quadrants, the training system fosters a deeper understanding and emotional engagement in the dog's behaviors. The dog learns not only what is expected of it but also why certain actions lead to specific consequences. This level of accountability instills a sense of responsibility and ownership in the dog's actions, ultimately creating a strong bond and trust between the dog and its trainer.

Through patience, consistency, and a thoughtful approach, this training system nurtures a confident and reliable retriever, capable of performing the fetch command with enthusiasm and precision. ★



Chris Armanini and “Rebel”



New Title Rosettes Available to Eligible MFGRC Members for Accomplishments in 2023

Members of the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club who earn new AKC or GRCA titles for their Golden Retrievers during calendar year 2023 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, 2023, and December 31, 2023. The deadline for receiving applications is end of business on January 5, 2024.

This year, there have been some modifications to the program to make the process work more smoothly for all involved. **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 2023: This is the place to put in precursor titles, IF they were earned in 2023. 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 2023 (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, 2023. 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 2023! Please let us know of any questions.

Susan Sherman
Robin Bowen
MFGRC New Title Rosettes Committee

Entry Form for MFGRC's 2023 End of Year Awards Sent to Members



Recently, the entry form for the MFGRC's end of year awards for dogs was sent to club members. Members of the Mid-Florida Golden Retriever Club who meet the criteria for eligibility are invited to submit entries for the club's annual year-end awards for 2023. The MFGRC encourages all members who meet the eligibility requirements to enter and compete for the awards and there is no charge to enter.

The dates for the awards run from December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023. All entries must be received by December 1, 2023, at 6 p.m. ET. NONE will be accepted after the deadline. Entries can be emailed to Andy Hall at andyhall58@hotmail.com or sent by mail to Andy Hall, 819 Wingate Trail, Port Orange, FL 32128. (if entry sent by mail, it must be **received**, not postmarked, by the same deadline as email).

If sending entry via email, please fill out the form and scan for emailing. If sending by mail, it is advisable to make a copy in case the entry gets lost in the mail. Please only send pages of the form relevant to your entry.

PLEASE FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY!

Documentation must be provided as specified.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA -- Dogs MUST reside with the person making the application. To be eligible for any official MFGRC award, member MUST have attended one club general meeting and worked a minimum of four hours at one MFGRC event for the club during the awards period (or performed the equivalent work behind-the-scenes, all subject to approval and verification). Information must be included on the entry form about meetings attended and club work performed (all subject to verification). Member submitting award entry must have been a member in good standing of MFGRC for the entire awards period as described above.

MFGRC is offering the following awards for 2023:

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 (Conformation)

Tracking Dog of the Year

Versatility Award

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

Recipients of all awards listed above receive a custom car magnet created by K9 Designs and presented by MFGRC. In addition, recipient of Show Dog of the Year receives special award of perpetual trophy donated by Wonderland's Golden Retrievers.

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.

Upland Hunting Dog of the Year Award (new in 2023) -- awarding the club's top owner/handler in AKC Upland Hunting Dog competition with a perpetual trophy donated by Elizabeth Scherer. Dogs will not earn points toward the MFGRC Versatility Award by competing in this category.

Any member who did not receive the entry form can request one from club secretary Andy Hall at andyhall58@hotmail.com. **ENTRY MUST BE RECEIVED BY DECEMBER 1, 2023, AT 6 P.M. ET**

THE WESTMINSTER KENNEL CLUB

THE WESTMINSTER KENNEL CLUB ANNOUNCES JUDGING PANEL FOR THE HISTORIC 148TH EVENT

*A lifelong preservation breeder and top-winning dog handler
will select America's Dog for 2024*

New York, NY — The Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show presented by Purina Pro Plan, America's second-longest continuously held sporting event after the Kentucky Derby, announced the Best in Show judge for the historic 148th Annual Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show will be Mrs. Rosalind Kramer of High Point, North Carolina. Mrs. Kramer will make her selection on the evening of Tuesday, May 14, in Arthur Ashe Stadium the culminating night of the competition. Westminster Week will be held for the second year at the home of the US Open, the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in Flushing, New York.

Mrs. Kramer brings a lifetime of experience as a preservation breeder, professional dog handler, American Kennel Club Executive Field Representative, and judge to the most prestigious assignment in the sport.

Mrs. Kramer has bred National Specialty and All-Breed Best in Show winners, and numerous top-ranked dogs. She handled top-winning Terriers and Toy dogs setting records that still stand today.

At the end of her career as a professional dog handler, Mrs. Kramer worked for the American Kennel Club (AKC) as an Executive Field Representative and Judges Education Chair. She retired from the AKC when she married Dr. Andrew Kramer, a fellow Terrier enthusiast, and began her judging career.

She is approved to judge the Terrier, Hound, and Toy Groups, as well as half the Sporting breeds and Best in Show. She has judged Best in Show at the prestigious Montgomery County Kennel Club, as well as Group competitions at the AKC National Championship Show. This will be Mrs. Kramer's fifth assignment at Westminster. She judged the Terrier Group in 2018, and the Toy Group in 2022.

2024 JUDGING PANEL

Seven **Group Judges** will make their selections over two nights at the Arthur Ashe Stadium with their winning dogs advancing to the Best in Show competition.

On Monday, May 13, the following judges will select four Group winners to advance to the Best in Show competition: Christine Erickson of Queen Creek, AZ for the **Hound** Group; Glen Lajeski of Cloverdale, California for the **Toy** Group; Fred C. Bassett of Broken Arrow, OK for the **Non-Sporting** Group; and Michael Faulkner of Center Cross, VA for the **Herding** Group.

On Tuesday, May 14, the following judges will select the remaining three Group winners to advance to Best in Show: David L. Kittredge of Rochester, NY for the **Sporting** Group; Rick Gschwender, of Nampa, Idaho for the **Working** Group; and Patricia Anne Keenan of Chehalis, Washington, for the **Terrier** Group.

Pending American Kennel Club approval, the judging panel for the **Best of Breed or Variety** competitions includes:

SPORTING BREEDS AND VARIETIES

- Gerardo Bernard of Mexico City, Mexico: English Setters, German Shorthaired Pointers, German Wirehaired Pointers, Gordon Setters, Irish Red and White Setters, Irish Setters, Pointers, Vizslas.
- Richard T. Jackson of La Plata, Maryland: American Water Spaniels, Irish Water Spaniels, Spinoni Italiani, Sussex Spaniels.
- Pamela S. Lambie of Phoenix, Arizona: Boykin Spaniels, Clumber Spaniels, Cocker Spaniels (all Varieties), English Cocker Spaniels, English Springer Spaniels, Field Spaniels, Welsh Springer Spaniels.
- Shawn J. Nichols of Calgary, Alberta, Canada: Chesapeake Bay Retrievers, Curly-Coated Retrievers, Flat-Coated Retrievers, Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retrievers, Weimaraners, Wirehaired Pointing Griffons, Wirehaired Vizslas.
- Judy Taylor of Cambridge, Ontario, Canada: **Golden Retrievers**, Labrador Retrievers.
- Joyce A. Vanek of Evergreen, Colorado: Barbets, Bracco Italiano, Brittany, Lagotti Romagnoli, Nederlandse Kooikerhondjes.

A star is born!



In August 2023 **“Jackson”** (CH Mariah n Questan’s Jacks or Better JAM RN JD TKN CGC) was highlighted on the UPS Dogs website with over 8.6K likes/views. He’s always been a good looking dog willing to please and that he did! He not only won over the heart of our local UPS Driver, Dan here in Tarpon Springs, but he made a shout out on the UPS Dogs page. It’s soon to be made into a calendar.

*Nancy Sigmon
Proud owner and MFGRC member
Tarpon Springs, FL*



ACCOLADES

Betty Lambert's 16 month old Golden boy "Charlie" recently graduated from a basic obedience training class and passed his Canine Good Citizen test. Also in his first season of Dock Diving he has earned two titles, qualified to attend the 2023 Regionals in Perry, GA and has now received an invitation to the October National Championship in Springfield, MO.



Board member Michele Throm's Golden girls "Mia" and "Ary" both earned Triple Q's toward their RACH, and several class placements, at the MFGRC Rally Trial in August.



Kitty Forguson's Golden boy "Steel" (Sunfire Steel My Heart CGCA CCA) finished his Obedience Beginner Novice title at the MFGRC Obedience Trial in Daytona Beach FL.



Connie Adams' Golden boy "Luke" finished his Obedience CD title at the MFGRC Obedience Trial in Daytona Beach FL.



Former MFGRC President Ann Rowe's Golden girl "Jasmine" (Goldrox Magik's Carp-et Ride RE CD) finished her Obedience CD title at the Obedience Club Of Daytona trial in Daytona Beach FL.



Patricia Albano's Golden boy "Brady" (Leongolden Greatest of All Time CGC CGCA CGCU TKN TKI TKA) received his first leg in NOVICE B at the MFGRC Trials in August. . He won a 2nd place for group Goldens and a 4th place for All Breed Novice B.

ACCOLADES . . .



New Champion - Morgan Brooks' "Lynda" (Monark-Landlord Wonder Woman Reload) was finished out of the Bred By class with 2 five point majors! And Lynda's father, "Max" (Monark All Tangled Up in Max), qualified for Top 20!!



Morgan Brooks' son Julian and "Delilah" (Summits Delicate and Dangerous) have 7 best juniors and are qualified for Royal Canin and Westminster.



Jenny Ford's Golden boy "Gunnar" went Select Dog for his second major towards his Grand Championship at the White River Golden Retriever Club Specialty PM show in August.



Bonnie Scherer's Golden girl "Tahani" (IABCA IntCH/NatCH Malagold Tahani CD RA TD JH CGC TKN WC CCA VC) earned both her IABCA National and International Champion titles at the IABCA Golden Retriever Specialty at Purina Farms/Purina Farms Summer Sieger in June.



Bonnie Scherer's Golden boy "Kody" (Am. CH SHR U-CH. IABCA WBCH/HnrCH-G/IntCH/NatCH Star Crowned Kodiak Island CD BN RE SHU JH CCA CGC TKN WCX VC RATI) earned both his IABCA Honors Champion in Gold and his World Beauty Championship titles at the IABCA Golden Retriever Specialty at Purina Farms/Purina Farms Summer Sieger in June.



Janice Smith and Golden girl "Winnie" (left) placed in the DTCSP Rally trial, and Lisa Boudreau and Golden girl "Spice" (right) earned the Rally Advanced title.



Lisa Boudreau and "Star" earned the Dock Diving Junior Advanced title at the Tampa Cluster. Lindsey Rodriguez and "Cora" earned the Dock Diving Junior title after just 2 shows.

MORE ACCOLADES . . .



Tony (Rangers Golden Promise TKN VHMA)



Pepper (Honey Gold Kisses TKN VHMA FITB)

Taylor & Angel Gordon's Golden girl "Pepper" (Honey Gold Kisses TKN VHMA FITB) and Golden boy "Tony" (Rangers Golden Promise TKN VHMA) placed in the top three of their dock diving division for International Dog Sports and were invited to the championships at the end of September in Ocala.

In June at Bark Week in Greenback, TN Johann Goines' Golden girl "Roo" earned 5 new titles. She is now officially- Lorelei's Hitchhiking To The Yellow Moon BCAT DN CGCA CGCU TKN. "Carter" is still enjoying retirement. CH Jazzie's Sunshine On A Leash Carter BN RN FDC CA FCAT RATN CGCA TKN



Connie Adams' UR02 Stonypoint's Nitety Serenade, CD,SWN,SCA,SIA,SBA,SEA,RE,BCAT,CGC,TKN--"Katie" and IUR01 BN Liebchen's-Windsor Skywalker Luke, BN,SEN,SIN,SBN,TKN,RN, CGCU--"Luke" had a very successful time at the Scent Work Club of Ocala's trials held at the Sumter County Fairgrounds In Bushnell FL. Golden girl "Katie" got off to a slow start on Saturday but on Sunday she rocked it by completing her Exterior Advanced title and earning her an Advanced Overall title. She then earned her first leg in Excellent Buried. Golden boy "Luke" did very well on both days earning his third leg and title in Novice Buried and his second leg in Novice Containers. He also placed fourth in each event!



Steve and Suzanne Dukes' Golden girl "Olive" passed her Canine Good Citizen Test with the Golden Paw Training Group of Sorrento, FL.

MORE ACCOLADES . . .



Barbara White's Golden boy "Mac" finished his DJX5 title from NADD, earned at Bratty Paws Dog Plex in Punta Gorda, FL.



Chris Armanini's 20 month old Golden boy "Rebel" (Magik's Dream Machine FDC SWN DS DJ CGCA CGCU ATT) recently earned his Novice Trick Dog and Intermediate Trick Dog titles.

. . . from Kristin Sipus, Richwood Goldens



We had a Spectacular weekend at the Atlanta GRC Specialties. I showed three of my Tuuli daughters - littermates Cuvée and Siri and their younger 1/2 Sister Tiki. Siri (owned by Lisa Donia and myself) won Open at all three specialties and was Reserve WB twice. Tiki (owned by Marsha Fushia and myself) her first time back in the ring since winning Best in Sweeps at last year's AGRC specialty, was second and fourth in a very big competitive American Bred class. And to make a good weekend even better, Cuvée (owned by hubby and myself) won Best of Breed from the Bred by Exhibitor class, earning her first 5 points...woohoo! Now back to the ponds and fields to continue training for Master.

MORE ACCOLADES . . .



OTCH 10! UDX 13!

It was a big weekend for MFGRC member **Susan Howard** and her champion Golden boy “Winston” at the MFGRC Obedience and Rally Trials at Daytona Beach! Susan and Winston finished his OTCH 10 title (Obedience Trial Championship – 10 times) and his UDX 13 title (Utility Dog Excellent – 13 times). They won multiple High Combined and High In Trial Awards over the course of the four trials, including sweeping HC and HC Golden Retriever and HIT and HIT Golden Retriever in the final trial.



In early August at the Australian Shepherd Club of Central FL in Orlando, Susan Howard’s young Golden boy “Flyte” made his debut in the obedience ring and went 4/4 in Preferred Novice with 4x 1st places & 4x Pref HIT’s!



Young Golden boy “Flyte” made his debut into the regular obedience classes in late August at the Dog Training Club of St. Petersburg trials, going 2/2 in Novice B with 2x 1st places (197 & 198). On the following day, he earned his first HIT, as he beat his dad Winston, who won Utility plus also High Combined!