



# Golden Tales

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December, 2020

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## A Message From Our President



Hello,

I hope everyone had a nice Thanksgiving. Bob and I spent a quiet day with our animals and reflected on all of the things we are so thankful for. Yes, they all got a few bites of turkey. Great weather allowed for a lot of ball playing and yard decorating.

It's hard to believe that we only have one month left in 2020. Through all that we have endured during such a challenging year we remain grateful for what GRR has been able to accomplish because of your support. We just took in our 100th dog of the year whom was so cleverly named Centurion. The [Tree of Hope](#) fundraising campaign is in full swing and the [GRR 2021 Calendars](#) are available for purchase. Plus you can do a little holiday shopping at the [GRR Online Store](#).

Our 2020 Tamara's Turkey dog mission is complete. All 13 Golden Retrievers are doing very well in their foster and foster pending adoption homes. We were quite pleasantly surprised with how relatively healthy the dogs are and their personalities and behaviors are just incredible, particularly thinking about where these dogs came from. We've already had our first Turkey dog, Acadia adopted by his wonderful foster family. We look forward to many more great updates as the dogs continue to settle in and thrive.

I want to let you know that Suzette Coen has given her resignation as our medical supervisor and board member, so that she has more time to work on her family's retirement plans for 2021. We are grateful for all Suzette has given to GRR. She will continue to work on our medical team. The GRR board of directors has appointed Hara Cootes to step in as the Medical Supervisor and board member at large. Hara Cootes has many years of experience working with GRR, particularly with fostering medical needs dogs. Welcome

Hara!

My family wishes you and your families a very healthy holiday season as the year comes to a close. We know there will be good things to come in 2021. GRR remains ready to help Golden Retrievers in need.

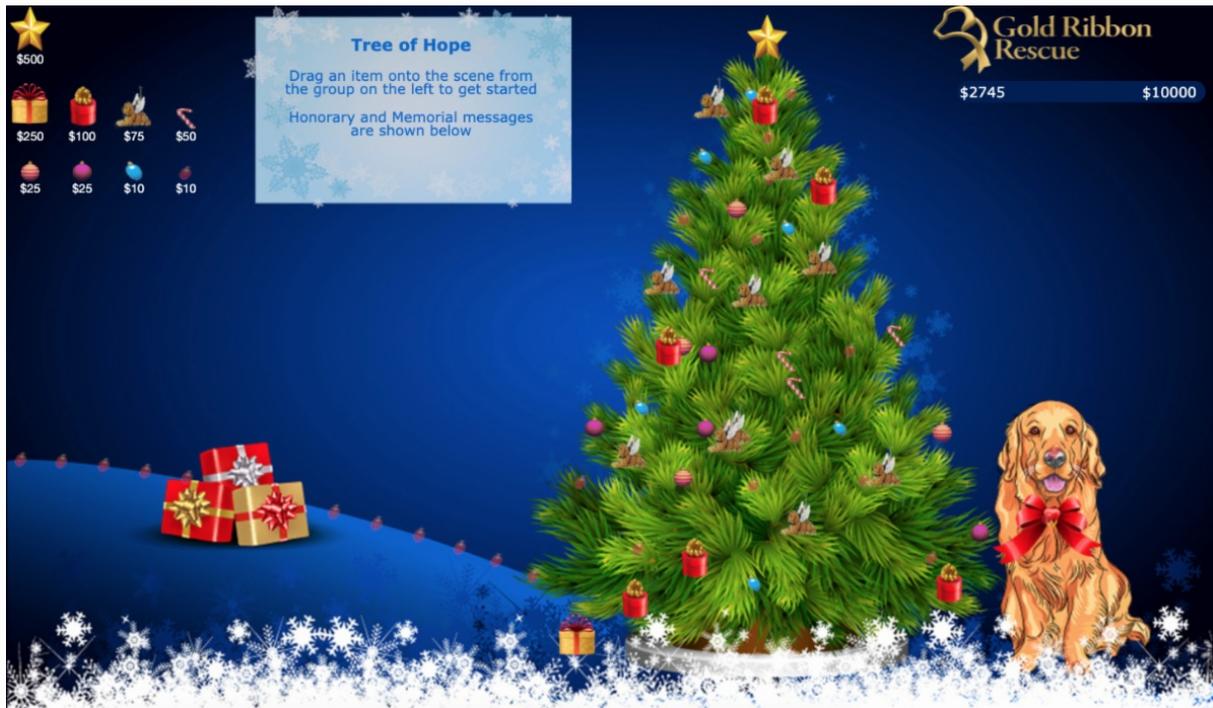
Warm regards,  
Michelle Goldberg

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Do you have questions or comments for the Board? We value your input. Please send a note to [grrboard@grr-tx.com](mailto:grrboard@grr-tx.com) and include **Questions For The Board** in the subject line. We hope to hear from you! The next board meeting is January 16, 2021.

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## Tree of Hope



Give Light To Hope – Click [Tree of Hope](#) to support our Extraordinary Golden Retrievers. You can also honor your own pet or a special loved one with a personal message.

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## Tomlinson's Pound4Pound

Every holiday season, [Tomlinson's Feed](#) hosts Austin's largest pet food drive in support of local animal rescues and shelters. From the Friday after Thanksgiving through Christmas Eve, each pet food bag donated by customers is doubled -- pound for pound. Gold Ribbon Rescue then donates the food raised to our foster families to help offset the costs of keeping a dog before it finds its forever home.

How to donate... You can donate [here](#) OR just ask the Tomlinson's cashier to apply the donation to Gold Ribbon while you are out shopping. For a store near you, click [here](#).

Please consider donating a bag or two during this time and show our support for our wonderful friends at Tomlinson's and help out our foster families at the same time!

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**December 1, 2020**

Giving Tuesday was created in 2012 as a day that encourages people to do good. It's a simple idea that has grown into a global movement that inspires hundreds of millions of people worldwide to give, collaborate and celebrate generosity.

Whether it's making someone smile, helping someone in need or supporting animals, every act of generosity counts and everyone has something to give.

This year, we hope you will support our Extraordinary Golden Fund that helps Golden Retrievers with substantial medical or behavioral needs by donating to the GRR [Tree of Hope](#). Besides helping future Golden Retrievers in need, the Tree of Hope is a great way to honor your own pet or a special loved one with a personal message. Thank you for your generosity.

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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS



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**The GRR Virtual Holiday Hoopla**

**Save the Date**

**Virtual GRR Holiday Hoopla  
December 17, 2020  
7:00 p.m. -8:00 p.m.**

While we may have to keep our distance this year, it hasn't stopped Gold Ribbon Rescue from showing off our holiday spirit at a GRR virtual Holiday Hoopla. Join Gail March and Richard Mattingly and celebrate the season with familiar carols and irreverent songs. Bob Birkeneder will gift us with a few of his favorites, as well. Plus, GRR President Michelle Goldberg will update everyone on GRR's latest Turkey Dog Mission!

No registration is required for this event. Simply click on this [link](#) to join on the 17th. Note, you do not have to be a Facebook user to see this event.

Look forward to celebrating holiday merriment with you. Questions? Please contact [Gail March](#) or [Paula Ellis](#).

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## **A Glimpse into the Life of Tamara**

### **Tamara Anne Gunter and her life's work with family pets**

Tamara spent the first three years of her life thinking that our two year old Saint Bernard, Sebastian, was her older brother. Fortunately, Sebastian was very gentle with her and accepted all expressions of her love whether they were: tail pulls, ear pulls, hugs, or swats. I'm sure he ate more than his share of Cheerios, cookies, and other tasty morsels as he waited patiently beneath her high chair. She learned to pull up on him by grabbing on to his thick coat. As she graduated to dolls and tea parties he was a welcome guest, most of the time. Tamara was five when Sebastian died. It was devastating to all of us but most of all Tamara.

#### **Tamara and Sebastian**



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#### **Tamara and Miss Doofey**

By the time Tamara was 12, she was caring for a rescued baby opossum. Miss Doofey was her baby and went everywhere with us including a stay at the Lowe's Anatole Hotel in

Dallas. Tamara and Miss Doofey were inseparable. It was especially difficult for Tamara when after only three short years, Miss Doofey passed away.



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Tamara's life was changed forever when we came home from a Christmas vacation only to find a cold, shivering, and very muddy Golden Retriever curled up on our front porch. After much begging and pleading I agreed to let Tamara and Thomas bring him inside. But first, he had to have a bath. The kids must have spent an hour scrubbing him from head to tail, blow drying his fur and brushing him. They promised that the bathroom would be immaculate afterward. The kids named him Butch. Once again, Tamara had found someone to love.

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### **Tamara and Bailey**

Over the years, Tamara cared for the usual and not so usual family pets: gerbils, fish, sea monkeys, parakeets, opossums, and dogs. There were no cats, because Tamara was highly allergic. Unlike her younger brother, Thomas, who opted for snakes, lizards, and toads, Tamara gravitated to animals who loved back. She had an amazing capacity to love all of her pets. But it was when Tamara adopted a Golden Retriever named Bailey, that Tamara found her true calling.



One of Tamara's most loving acts of kindness was her work with Gold Ribbon Rescue. Over the course of 17 years, Tamara fostered 33 Golden Retrievers, adopting a very lucky few for herself although it wasn't always clear just who was rescuing whom. Her forté was ministering to the seniors or toughest to adopt. Of those who were closest to her heart, Olive and Hunter, sadly, have passed on. On the night that Tamara passed, as I sat by her bed, sweet 10 year-old Lark came in and buried her head in my lap and cried. Lark is now in the loving care of Tamara's dear friend Howard Curtis. I think of Tamara being greeted by her beloved Goldens, smothered in licks and kisses, and her family that has gone before, waiting in line for their turn.

Anne Boykin  
Tamara's Mother

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## Our 2020 Turkey Dogs

They are known as Turkey's Forgotten Dogs. On November 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, ten homeless Goldens arrived from Istanbul and into the care of Gold Ribbon Rescue. An additional three Goldens arrived on November 18th and were escorted from Houston to Austin by Michelle Goldberg, Paulette Lance and Pat Capin. This initiative is known as [Tamara's Turkey Dog Rescue Mission](#) in honor of a long-time GRR volunteer who is sponsoring this initiative.

A pair of wonderful Turkish women have made it their life mission to round up the Goldens from the streets and forests where they have been abandoned and get them to countries that love them.

Join us in welcoming these beautiful creatures who so desperately need our care and our love.. Many thanks to everyone who sponsored a Turkey Dog! They are all sponsored!



**Name:** Acadia  
**Gender:** Male  
**Age:** 4 years  
**Sponsored by:**  
 Donnie & Cheryl Smith



**Name:** Biscayne  
**Gender:** Female  
**Age:** 2 years  
**Sponsored by:**  
 Michelle Goldberg  
 Bob Benson



**Name:** Denali  
**Gender:** Female  
**Age:** 5-6 years  
**Sponsored by:**  
 Glenn & Char Larson



**Name:** Glacier  
**Gender:** Male  
**Age:** 1½ years  
**Sponsored by:**  
 Susan Pryor



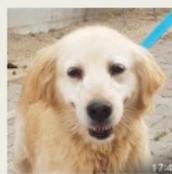
**Name:** Katmai  
**Gender:** Female  
**Age:** 5 years  
**Sponsored by:**  
 Lavonne Gangl



**Name:** Rainier  
**Gender:** Female  
**Age:** 2 years  
**Sponsored by:**  
 Amy McCaffrey



**Name:** Rocky  
**Gender:** Male  
**Age:** 3-4 years  
**Sponsored by:**  
 Kelly Topfer



**Name:** Shenandoah  
**Gender:** Female  
**Age:** 5-6 years  
**Sponsored by:**  
 Susan Eggert



**Name:** Teton  
**Gender:** Male  
**Age:** 2 years  
**Sponsorship:**  
 Kathy & Ken Kerr



**Name:** Zion  
**Gender:** Male  
**Age:** 4 years  
**Sponsored by:**  
 Donnie & Cheryl Smith



**Name:** Joshua  
**Gender:** Male  
**Age:** 8 years  
**Sponsored by:**  
 Nancy McGowan



**Name:** Bryce  
**Gender:** Male  
**Age:** 6 years  
**Sponsored by:**  
 Cam Snyder



**Name:** Cascade  
**Gender:** Female  
**Age:** 2 years  
**Sponsored by:**  
 Shuping Chen

### An update on a few of our Turkey Dogs

#### ZION 20- 086T

The foster reports that Zion is doing really well. He's such a good boy and already has learned some manners which is amazing after living on the streets or in the forest. He's eating very well and working hard to heal and rest. Zion just took a mile walk and he didn't pull a bit. Loves the foster's acre backyard and the deer, foxes, and open space (fenced that is). His favorite thing outside eating is car rides! He sleeps through the night (from day one).

Thanks to sponsors Donnie and Cheryl Smith

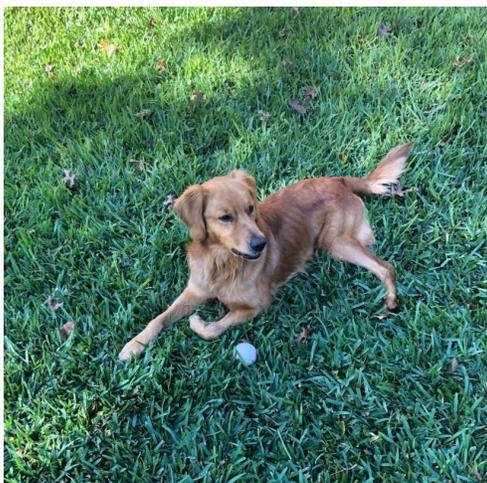




### TETON 20-085T

Although estimated at two years old by the vet, Teton is still very much playful and puppy-like. He absolutely adores his stuffed dog and takes it everywhere with him. He might be one of the most intelligent dogs I have ever seen - he picks up on everything almost immediately including potty training and the house rules.

Teton likes to play fetch and will actually bring the ball back to you (well, maybe 90% of the time, and wants to play keep away 10% of the time).



Out on walks, things are still scary. We are learning about bicycles, buses, dogs on leashes, and lawn



In the house, he is a cuddle-bug and likes to curl into your body for some rubs. If you are working and cannot

gnomes, and are slowly gaining some confidence.

He is learning that he doesn't have to defend himself with his deep bark, which I'm sure served him well in the Istanbul forest.

pet, he will lay on your feet and snooze.

Thanks to sponsors Kathy and Ken Kerr

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### RAINIER 20-089T



The foster reports that Rainer is doing great! She LOVES food, belly rubs and nudges the foster with her head when he stops petting her to make sure he keeps going.

Rainer is also very smart and has had no accidents at all.....seems to be completely housebroken. Rainier became comfortable really fast in the house, enjoys the backyard and has started to sleep in her bed comfortably. Perhaps it was meant to be as Rainier's foster to adopt dad is from Turkey so she has extra special meaning to him.

Thanks to Amy McCaffrey for sponsoring Rainier

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**The Gold Ribbon Rescue Store  
Perfect for Your Gifting Needs!**



To shop, go to [The Ribbon Rescue Store](#)

## The Noble Four

It's a true rescue story: four retired service dogs, taking it easy after years of work as bomb sniffers, fell on hard times when the caretaker hired by their loving owner completely neglected them. Salsa, Gus, Tuff, and Pete missed out on months of heartworm meds, vet visits, human interaction, and even regular food. It's no exaggeration to say that the utter lack of care would ultimately have ended in their deaths... if not, ironically, for the arrival of Hurricane Laura in late August: the storm that put their lives at risk ultimately saved them.

The "caretaker" ran for higher ground, leaving the dogs alone in their outdoor pens to weather the wind and torrential rain. Alarmed and worried, the owner called a friend to check on them—and the whole horrific situation came to light. Matted, dirty, hungry, heartworm positive, suffering from ear and eye and tooth troubles, the old quartet needed help fast! The rescue network went into overdrive, and a week later all four—deemed "GRR's Noble 4" for their years of service to state and country—were safe at a GRR clinic. .



**Salsa (20-056) at the lake.**

That was almost 3 months ago. Sadly, yellow Lab **Salsa (20-056)**, the only girl, passed away a few weeks after rescue. The effects of prolonged starvation and untreated dental disease had left her 30 pounds underweight, in renal failure, and simply too far gone for us to save. But she spent her last days clean, cared for, loved, and sunning herself at the lake. It's heartbreaking, but sometimes, providing end-of-life care is the best that we can do.

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Our three boys, though, have happier news to share! Their fur is growing in and taking on a pretty gloss, they're putting on weight, and they no longer need to worry about a thing.

**Tuff (20-054)**, the elder statesman at 12+, has been adopted by his foster family—including Golden Luna! "As you can see, Luna is thrilled to have a fun new big brother. The two of them are like peas in a pod and instantly became inseparable. Tuff enjoys keeping our house safe, employing his bomb-sniffing skills to point out the dangers of a sack of plant food (which he at once let us know was a disaster waiting to happen), sitting in our laps, napping, and playing with his little sister."

Nine-year-old **Gus (20-055)**, another redhead, hit a bump in the road early on with several seizures, but meds are keeping that issue under control.

"Guess who has gained 10 lbs since coming into GRR! Gus-Gus was 42 lbs at intake; now almost 53. He is becoming quite a goofball! He is starting to initiate play with my dog. And he follows her everywhere. He is now a permanent foster and will be staying here for good."



Black Lab **Pete (20-057)**, at about 8 years old, is “a super loving puppy.” He had a bad case of “happy tail”: not such a happy problem to have, as repeated enthusiastic whacking against hard surfaces causes wounds that are notoriously hard to resolve

Ultimately we had most of his tail amputated. “He can wag what’s left to his heart’s content with no damage. He has several toys that he loves. He started out super skinny, so we are feeding him four to five smaller meals every day to let him know he’ll always have plenty to eat AND to work on his manners.”



**Foster Failure! Reagan 20-030**  
**Julie Birkeneder**



We recently fostered one of GRR's Memorial Day weekend puppies. Turned out all seven intakes had medical issues requiring vigilant foster care. We've earned the infamous title of foster failures! Reagan grabbed our hearts very quickly. A little boy so smart, so curious, who loves to play and retrieve a ball non-stop for hours on end. High energy x 10!

We had not imagined what a gift Reagan would be to us through the ups and downs of a Pandemic. He makes us laugh; even as a puppy he is gentle around our elderly live-in mom. All four goldens have become loving companions and furry therapists to us, and us to them!

Coollest thing? Reagan has literally helped transform Jovie. She took him under her wing as mama. She has become gentle, loving, almost as tuned into his needs as we are. Suddenly, Jovie was no longer protective of her toys but readily played with Reagan. Though we never leave them alone, he can boldly walk up to her and wrestle for a toy: total joy. They are inseparable!

GRR you are an AMAZING organization filled with kind-hearted, like-spirited, fully committed dog lovers who only want every single golden to be welcomed into the wonderful life they all deserve! Our doggies give us so much more than we could ever give to them! Thanks for changing our lives and the lives of SO MANY GRR dogs FOREVER!

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**Thoughts, Prayers and  
Remembrance...**

**Maggie 18-0114**



Newsletter Editor: Dorian Olsen

Send comments or suggestions to: [newsletter@grr-tx.com](mailto:newsletter@grr-tx.com)

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