

GRREAT *Foster Homes*

Fall 2013 Edition

GRREAT Beginnings

www.GRREAT.org/fosters

Transporting Your Foster Dog

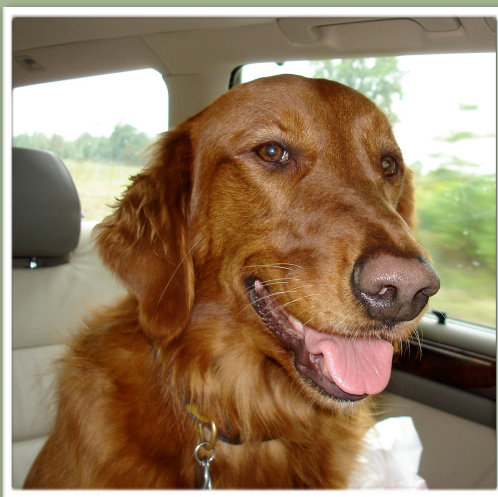
by Art Hotop

One of the many groups working to bring a dog into GRREAT is the Transport Team. When GRREAT receives notice that a Golden Retriever has been identified in a shelter, or by an owner for turn in, a notification goes out requesting the Transport Team to schedule a pick up of the dog. Depending on many circumstances, the requirement might be for an immediate pickup or the owner might provide a more lenient 'no later than' (NLT) date.

Once a request to transport has been sent out, the Transport Team determines the timing requirement and the most efficient method to move the dog. Factors such as driving distance, weather, and especially the next location for the dog, all play a factor in planning.

If a Foster Home (FH) has been identified, the preferred method is to move the dog directly to the FH. Alternatively if the NLT date requires a move before the FH can be finalized, the dog is normally moved to one of the many animal hospitals (AH) used by GRREAT. Proximity to the pick-up site and centralized location all play a role in making the decision as to which AH. The Transport Team coordinates all requests for a transport to a FH through the FH Coordinator and requests for boarding at an AH are handled by Martha VanLandingham, who is on the Intake Team, as well as a member of the FH Support Team.

If the dog is to be picked up from the owner, the transporter is required to have the owner sign a release form that officially transfers the dog to GRREAT. Additionally, if at all possible, the



transporter is provided a leash and collar with a GRREAT tag attached. That should be placed on the dog immediately as a means of identification. Frequently the owner may want to provide doggie toys, bedding, food bowls, etc., and all that should accompany the dog to the next location. Owners are asked by the Intake Team to have medical records faxed to the Medical Coordinator, prior to the dog being picked up. If the owner has not been able to do this, we ask that veterinary records be turned over when the dog is picked up from the owner. These records can be copied by the AH or the FH upon arrival and the originals turned over to GRREAT.

Actual movement of the dog may be done by one of the Transport Team members, or more likely, by one of the many transport volunteers. As an example, dogs coming from southern VA and going to central or northern MD may require the participation of several transport volunteers. A sample route

might be from Roanoke, VA to a FH in Baltimore, MD. Once the Transport Team knows the pick-up requirements and the availability of the FH/AH, the Team contacts volunteers in the general area and sets up the route and times in coordination with all the volunteers availability. In the above example, an initial volunteer in the Roanoke area will make the final coordination with the dog's owner (or shelter), pick up the dog and move it north and east to meet a

second volunteer at a time and place they have previously coordinated. The second volunteer continues the movement north and east to a third volunteer and so on. Generally, the Transport Team thinks in terms of no more than two-hour round trips for the volunteers. Once the dog has successfully arrived at the final stop, the final transport volunteer sends out an e-mail, advising of the completed move.

Transportation is one of the more satisfying tasks in the transfer of a dog to GRREAT because the volunteer gets to have actual contact with the dog. Many volunteers have moved a hundred or more dogs over the years and I believe without exception, they would say it has always been a pleasurable experience. If you are interested in volunteering to assist with the transport of a Golden for GRREAT, please contact Bob Patenaude at bjzk@msm.com.



Gracie's Story

by Ann Nelson, POC Team Leader

Most often when people think of rescue, the image that comes to mind is the rescue of a dog suffering abuse or neglect. While this is often true, it is also an incomplete picture of what rescue can accomplish. A rewarding and often invisible aspect of rescue includes those situations where GRREAT can assist with bringing a dog out of a situation that both cripples the dog's spirit, and hampers the mental and emotional development of the dog.

This is the story of Gracie. Gracie was adopted from a breeder when she was a cute little white puppy. After just over a year with a family that was not prepared for the challenges of an energetic and strong-willed puppy, Gracie was described in vet reports as being fear-aggressive. Her owners surrendered her to GRREAT, fearing that Gracie might bite their children, after seeing her growl several times at different family members.

Gracie was described in the intake report as being a shy dog, and since we have a special fondness for that type of dog, we agreed to foster her. During the first 24 hours in our home, Gracie would bring my husband a ball to play with, and then on two occasions during the play, she rewarded him with a bite on his hand! With 4 other dogs in our house at that time, we were concerned that this seemingly aggressive little girl would cause the other dogs to act out, whether to protect us, or just to respond in kind to her behavior.

We contacted the Foster Home Coordinator asking that Gracie be moved to another foster home. She asked if we wanted to talk to a trainer, and we were very excited to have the opportunity to do so. Since we lived outside of the service area of most trainers at that time, the person that GRREAT connected us with agreed to do a phone consultation with us as a preliminary step towards working things out with Gracie. During that phone conversation, the trainer explained resource guarding to us and offered ways to deal with it and improve Gracie's behavior.

After a few days, since Gracie was beginning to relax and we were given the support from GRREAT and

help from a professional trainer, we decided to keep Gracie as our foster. Gracie began to relax, and to play with the other dogs in the house. Meanwhile, we worked on her resource guarding, using the positive reinforcement techniques explained to us by the trainer.

We were thrilled to watch Gracie transform from a scared puppy with unacceptable defensive reactions including the bites to the hand, to a sweet and loving dog who would curl up on my husband's tummy and settle in for a nap with him!

After several weeks of working with her at home, we began to take her to adoption events. We remained extremely vigilant with her, given her history of fear around certain people, and if she began to growl, we immediately asked folks to back off and give her space. Gracie soon found an admirer at one event, and she decided that this man was soothing and safe. After a few visits at our home with



the family and their current dog, Gracie went home with her new family. With the support we had gotten from the trainer, we were able to give the new family an accurate assessment of Gracie's behavior, and help the new family understand how to work with Gracie, and how to continue the program that we had started with her to learn to trust people and overcome her fears and related guarding behavior.

During the post-adoption phone calls, we were pleased to learn that Gracie's new family was making progress with Gracie, and we confirmed that this truly was a 'happily ever after' for this beautiful dog.

Through the efforts of many dedicated volunteers with GRREAT, she was rescued from a situation that confused her mind and crippled her development and was soon transformed into a sweet, active and well-behaved dog who continues to bring joy to her new forever family.



Canine Influenza: The Facts

by Lucinda Twining, Medical Coordinator



It has been all over the news lately; stories about shelters closing their doors temporarily while infected dogs recover and the shelter is disinfected. There are stories about veterinarians recommending that owners keep their dogs away from dog parks or doggie day care centers until “this all dies down.” Then, just the other day, the annual Doggie Dip Day in Rockville, MD was canceled for this year due to concerns over the canine flu. All of these stories are followed by strong recommendations that you get your dog(s) vaccinated.

So, What is the Canine Flu?

Dogs were believed to be immune to the flu virus until 2004 when the first confirmed cases of canine flu were found in racing greyhounds in Florida. Because dogs had no natural immunity to this new virus, it spread quickly and, only a year later, it was starting to appear in dogs outside of Florida. Studies of the canine flu virus (H3N8) show that canine flu is a mutation of the equine influenza virus. Similar to the way bird flu mutated and jumped from birds to humans, the equine flu mutated and jumped from horses to dogs.

How is the Flu Spread?

An infected dog can spread the flu even before he/she shows any symptoms. Other dogs coming into direct contact with the infected dog or with the dog’s secretions can catch the virus. The virus can remain active on bowls, toys, collars, and leashes for several days. The virus can even be transmitted between infected and uninfected dogs by the people around them; an infected dog gets saliva on the person’s hands or sneezes or coughs on the person’s clothes, then the person comes into contact with an uninfected dog and spreads the virus to that dog. An infected dog should be considered contagious for 14 days.

That’s why places like dog parks, doggie day care centers, dog shows, dog sporting activities (agility, obedience rallies, etc.) boarding kennels, and shelters are considered areas to avoid when canine flu is active in the area.

What Are the Symptoms and How is it Treated?

Generally symptoms may include: runny nose, sneezing, coughing, decreased appetite, decreased activity, and sometimes a fever.



Treatment depends on the symptoms and how sick the dog is. The mild form is generally treated with cough suppressants and rest. If there is a secondary infection, the vet may add an antibiotic. If the dog has a more severe form of the flu, the vet may use a broad spectrum antibiotic and may wish to hospitalize the dog to provide more supportive care until he/she begins to feel better.

How can I Protect my Dog(s)?

When you have contact with other dogs at a shelter, a boarding facility, or other activity where the dogs may have been exposed to the canine flu, be sure to wash your hands thoroughly and, perhaps even change your clothes, before you have any contact with your own dog(s).

Do not let your dog(s) socialize with any dogs that are coughing. The incubation period for the flu virus is 2-5 days after

exposure. If your dog develops a cough, do not ignore it; take him/her to the vet to be checked out.

If you tend to take your dog(s) to areas where they are likely to meet a lot of other dogs, or if you are planning to board them, you may want to talk with your vet about the canine flu vaccine.

Do I Need to Worry That the Foster Dogs I Bring Into My Home Might Spread the Flu to My Dogs?


During this time while the flu is so active in this area, we have made the decision that all dogs coming into the rescue from a shelter will go to a vet to be examined before coming to you. If he/she is showing any symptoms of the flu, we will keep the dog at the animal hospital until deemed no longer contagious before bringing him/her to you.


We have always recommended that you may wish to isolate your new foster dog for a few days prior to allowing him/her to interact with your dog(s), at least until your initial vet visit, just to be sure he/she is not bringing anything contagious into your home. However, we know that many of you haven’t felt that precaution is necessary. Now, with so many reports of canine flu outbreaks in this region, you may want to consider that a little more carefully. Remember, even a dog who appears healthy today could become ill in a day or two, so keeping your new foster separate from your own dog(s) for a few days, just to be sure no symptoms appear, makes good sense.


Finally, it may be a good idea for you to talk with your vet and get the canine flu vaccine for your dog(s).




Helpful Hints and Reminders

 If your foster dog needs help from a trainer, it's as simple as letting let your Support Team know! We have a Training Coordinator and a network of trainers, so help is just an email away.

 Please remember to get your foster dog to your GRREAT vet as soon as possible after getting him/her into your home. The only exception to this is if your foster dog is coming to you after a hospital stay/boarding, but even then, you'll need to review the paperwork you get, to ensure that all necessary vaccinations and tests have been done.

 If your foster dog is not microchipped, it's very important to make arrangements to get this done as soon as you can. When you receive your "welcome" letter from your POC, the list of GRREAT microchippers will be attached, so please contact the microchipper who is closest to you, to make arrangements. Please do NOT ask your GRREAT vet to microchip your foster.

 Your Support Team is always available to help you with your foster dog. There is no such thing as a silly question, so don't ever hesitate to ask for help.

Mark Your Calendar & Support GRREAT at These Events

September 28, 2013

WALK FOR PAWS - 10am until 3pm

Lake Elkhorn, 7200 Dockside Ln, Columbia MD ([map](#))

Volunteer - <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0F48AEA72BA02-walk1>

October 5, 2013

ADOPTION DAY - Alexandria VA, 12pm until 2pm

Petco, 6612 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, VA 22306 ([map](#))

Volunteer - <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0F48AEA72BA02-adoption10>

October 19, 2013

McLean Pet Fest 2013 - 12pm until 3pm

McLean Central Park, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd, McLean VA. ([map](#))

Plan to join us at this event to celebrate our friends and buddies, our pets. Bring you pets and peruse other vendors while listening to great music and a performance by the Amazing Leroy. Enter your dog in a dog trick contest or dress your pet up as one of your favorite characters to participate in the Howl-a-Ween Parade. GRREAT will also be doing Microchipping.

To Volunteer: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0F48AEA72BA02-mclean1>

October 26, 2013

GRREAT 3K Walk - Fairfax VA, 10am

Weber's Pet Supermarket, 11021 Lee Hwy Fairfax, VA 22030 ([map](#))

For more information on the walk: <http://grreat.org/3kwalk.htm> To volunteer: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0F48AEA72BA02-grreat3>

November 2, 2013

ADOPTION DAY - Rockville MD, 12pm until 2pm

Bark!, Congressional Plaza, 1643 Rockville Pike, Rockville MD ([map](#))

Volunteer: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0F48AEA72BA02-adoption13>

December 14, 2013

ADOPTION DAY - Arlington VA, 12pm until 2pm

Petco Unleashed, 5400 Lee Hwy Arlington, VA ([map](#))

Volunteer: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/>