

GOLDEN MOMENTS ISSUE 20

Newsletter of

SOUTHERN GOLDEN RETRIEVER RESCUE

Registered Charity Number 1098769
PO Box 112 Cranbrook Kent TN17 4RB



Holly

From: [June Kelly](#)

Sent: Thursday, October 18, 2012 11:46 AM

To: rachel@leywoodfarm.org.uk

Subject: Golden Retriever Newsletter

Hi Rachel

It is with sadness that I write to tell you that our Golden passed away at the end of August, she would have been 14 this week. Although her rear legs were very unsteady and she was on pain killers we always felt that when she no longer enjoyed life then we knew the time had come. Unfortunately within two days she went downhill fast, we called the vet out to her and he said although she could be helped it was kinder to let her go.

We gave a home to Holly when she was three, her original family had triplets and one on the way and could no longer give Holly the walks she needed, she weighed 40k. With the help of the vet and long walks we got Holly down to a reasonable weight, but her love of food was a constant problem. She had many years of happiness, her favourite pastime was on the beach where she could swim and roll in the sand and finish off with a sausage at the beach cafe. We would bring half the beach home with us and she would need to be groomed, which she wasn't very fond of.

When we had Holly for six months we then gave a home to a Cairn Terrier, Charlie, who had been ill treated. Holly and Charlie became firm friends, whereby Holly took it upon herself to be his protector and would not let any large dogs bother him. She would charge across the beach barking and herd them away like sheep, very amusing to watch.

Holly was a great friend and loved by everyone that knew her and thought you may like to put her picture in your newsletter.

Many thanks

June

Hartley

Ruth and I have enjoyed the company of successive Golden Retrievers over the past 20 years our last friend Amber died in 2009. During the interning period we thought long and hard for a replacement and were fortunate to find information regarding the Southern Area Retriever Rescue on the internet. We contacted Rachel to discuss the availability of a Retriever, but it was at a time when demand

outstripped supply which of course is good in one respect, we also discussed alternatives such as a puppy!! We remembered the hard work with training but thought that it would be worthwhile.



By sheer luck Ruth decided to give Rachel another ring to discuss puppy breeders that she could recommend. As luck would have it Rachel had just been contacted by a family who had a 2 year old Retriever they wished to rehome and would we be interested? Rachel had not met the dog herself but had been fully briefed by a colleague who had met the family and dog whose

was Harley, this was the first surprise as we have lived in Hartley for over 25 years and we could become the proud owners of a dog with nearly the same name! Rachel was keen to move forward with the rehoming if we were happy and we joined her for a trip to Sandwich to meet the family and Harley.

We were delighted with what we found a quiet well behaved, slim Retriever with a beautiful dark brown coat and very pleased to see all the visitors. Ruth and I took Harley for a walk and it did not take long for us to reach a decision that he should come back to Hartley with us. Harley was not the best car passenger and moaned all the way back but I am pleased to say that has improved tremendously, we still feel if there was a choice between walking and jumping in the car the walking would win every time in Harleys eyes

That trip to Sandwich is now a year ago, Harleys birthday in fact he has settled in so very well, well

behaved, can be trusted not to go upstairs makes no attempt to sit on chairs and you have to remember to tell him to eat his food or he will just sit and look at it. Initially our only area of concern was that he enjoyed hunting in our local woods and would disappear for 10-15 mins at a time (have you heard this before) however with the use of a whistle he now responds and returns straight away, a small treat is forthcoming which always helps A quiet sensitive dog who enjoys his walks and who is a delight to have around, and we will always be grateful to Rachel and the Southern Area Retriever organisation for helping us find a real friend

Ruth and Tony Lyne

December2012

In celebration of all things Golden

It all started so quietly, a beautiful new puppy, the Goldie I had always wanted, little bundle of fluff. So how, some 9 years later, did I manage to have had 7 Goldie's along the way and 4 still living at home ???

My little bundle 'Chester' started the attention seeking behaviour early; he turned out to have hip and elbow dysplasia and despite his first surgery at 6 months of age turned out to be a complete life saver. Of course him being so sad and needy set the trap for me to fall for his sister 'Charley' aged 3 months and the runt of the litter who no one would take. Another bundle of trouble who ended up falling in love with my sister...you with me so far !?

Charley jumped ship heading off to Kent with Auntie Alison, having eaten the pet rabbit and most of the kitchen wall so we decided that Chester was needed company. Having registered with the



Tallis

lovely Pat Marchant it was not long before the call came saying that a lovely 6 year old Goldie had come into care and would we consider her although she was a bit of a challenge. (Years later and way too late, I realise that these words are the trigger to me saying yes to pretty much anything!)

Saffron had been used for a breeding but was too old, too much trouble, chewed everything, had terrible wet eczema, hated water and barked all the time. (The perfect pet!) Of course we agreed to meet her and see if we all got on and could manage her. I think it took 5 minutes before she jumped

into the care and gave us a look that said 'well are we going home or not?' She is now 'number two' in the pack and yes she chews but years of chewing have left her with no teeth so the damage is minimal, yes she barks but apparently that's my fault for not feeding her quickly enough, or not picking up the ball quickly enough. She gets wet eczema but as I might as well get my salary paid straight into the vet, what's a lifetime supply of hibiscrub between friends?! And as for water.... I nearly rang Pat the first time Saffron went swimming for 1 ½ hours chasing ducks or the time she tried to swim to France.

After Saffron had been with us for nearly a year, our family had our own challenges; my husband Roger, developed cancer and died. Making it through the days that followed with two small children was only possible with my lovely Chester and Saffy. It is not an understatement to say that they saved me on many a day when I thought enough was enough. It is also true to say that if they ever

learn to talk, I am in deep trouble!! They made us laugh, made me get out of bed, made the children walk to school and cuddled us when we cried.

Whilst my daughter was taking a break with the famous Auntie Alison and Charley, I had a frantic phone call; 'mum there's a Goldie who needs us' (you know where this is going don't you?)

I was sure that this Goldie was quite capable of finding love somewhere and that we were struggling on quite enough without extras. Then the clincher: 'but mum she has cancer and has only months to live, we can't let her die in kennels.' (Sold to the mug in the front row!! I hear you shout!) This led us to the lovely Rachel who reassured me that Holly would find somewhere to go and the tumours may be fatal but equally may not. Rachel was very reassuring as we picked the fleas off Holly on her lounge carpet and wondered if she has ever had any muscles on her back legs! She was 9 but looked 109, but the eyes just had to glance and, you guessed it, home she came. Poor Holly did have to have major surgery to remove what turned out to be all sorts of different cancer's, but 2 years on, minus both cruciate ligaments and on heaps of medication, she is a happy old lady apt to bark if something isn't the way she likes it. Standing up may not work, sitting down is even less elegant but those eyes still get me.

Have you ever said something and then realised that it might get you into a heap of trouble? Casual remarks that you sincerely mean but then..... 'we could do fostering' we said to Rachel, this proved to be a curve ball last year. We had been forced to move out of the family home after Roger's death and a little over a year ago moved into a small box in the corner of a cul-de-sac. Feeling rather glum, a chance call from Rachel sent Goldie's to the rescue again.

Rachel mentioned that they were looking for a foster home to help a dog in need. I gulped, four Goldie's in a smaller house with carpets and smaller garden and full time job??..yes why not!! I then spoke to Myra another shining example of the dedicated coordinators from Retriever Rescue. It turned out that two dogs needed rehoming urgently but were in such a state that they needed assessment first to see where they needed to be. I wondered if I would be able to foster, could I care for them and then give them up? Could I mange 5 Goldie's in the same small house? Turned out to be one of the most rewarding things I have done.



Chester, Saffron, Tallis & Holly

My heart has been cracked, snapped and bent out of shape a fair few times over my dogs but these two? Every maternal instinct came rushing out as I saw two beautiful Goldie's living in squalor and their condition..well I didn't know where to start. They each weighed in over 50 kg , their coats were like sheep's matted wool, the smell...not attractive and but amazingly the love and fun was still there in their eyes. They had been loved almost to death, guilt at not being able to walk them had led to overfeeding, guilt at not being

able to brush them had led to over feeding and guilt at them being overweight had sadly led to overfeeding. But they were loved. The bravest thing to do is sometimes to admit that you are not the best person for the dog and thankfully, through skilful negotiation between Myra and a local vet nurse, the owners were brave enough to let these two go.

I have never seen the suspension of a car go down like it did that day ! 100kg of smelly dog in the back nearly finished us all off. But home we came. Chester by this time was wondering what was going on, he looked at me the way like a patient husband would at finding yet another new pair of

shoes in the wardrobe ! Even my mother thought I may have gone too far this time!

These two beauties were indeed a challenge, but gradually they could walk for 5 minutes at a time, and then ten and then even fifteen. We had so many little triumphs: real life can seem really harsh in the human world but the day Portia managed to roll onto her back without stranding herself was like Christmas! Beema started chasing his tail and gradually the weight started to come off.(the dogs lost some too !) They were only with us for 3 or 4 weeks but in that time they made us feel like we had made a real difference. Having got to know the dogs, we were able to help choose their new parents and in new homes they have gone from strength to strength. I got more Christmas cards from Goldie's than people last year: just the way I like it !

Just as we were reflecting on our fostering experience and how we would do it again, we got a call from Myra. A 13 year old Goldie needed a foster home...there was no neglect, no horror story just a change of circumstances which had left this old boy looking for somewhere to be. If I am honest, the most important lesson in my brief experience with Goldie's has come from Rachel and Myra. I want to scream and shout at people who use dogs to breed and then neglect them, who don't treat the cancers or the fleas, I want to harangue them for turning an old boy out of his home after 13 years, but I have learned humility and the truth is people fall on hard



Portia, Beema & Holly

times or circumstances and it is not our place to judge, it is just our privilege to be there to pick up a few pieces.

My latest broken piece came in the form of my Tallis. I can't even tell you how he managed it but within seconds of him staggering through my front door, I was putty in his hands. How did I know? When I got a call from Myra a week after he arrived and in an instant I realised that I would be so upset if she had found him a home: he is my number 4. I could regale you with tales of how he has overcome the fact that he can't see, can't hear, can't really walk or even go more than a few hours without a pee, but he is so much more. He is hysterical when his front end wants to move and his back end just will not listen, he has us stitches when he can't hear the commands or see the hand gestures we try and so just reverses up the hall . He melts my heart when he just rests his head on my knee, my arm, my anything just to be close. The sight of him and Holly trying to get up or sit down, well it's a ballet which is enough to make you howl with laughter. Yes dinner time is more like a hospital medicine round, the district nurses give us incontinence pads for night time and joke that I am now running a retriever hospice but these Goldie's make us so much more human.

Obviously I am rather a fan of the Goldie, but actually any dog, will make your life better, give an extra dimension, and stop the selfishness of humanity. Give fostering a go, it isn't hard, it won't break your heart and the rewards are amazing.

The children, now teenager hormone factories, fall over the dogs, complain that there are too many, moan about the mess and the medicines but deep down they know, in the case of fire grab a dog....It's the only guarantee that Mum will be coming back for you! And my 4 Goldie's, the small house, the carpets, the small garden, full time job and open university course? Easy !

From: S HURST [mailto:s.hurst115@btinternet.com]

Sent: 20 February 2013 10:12