

# Golden Nuggets

www.egrr.net

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## The Wilson Award



Wilson was approximately 1 year old when EGRR agreed to take him from the Whidbey Animals' Improvement Foundation because he had a seizure disorder. It was immediately apparent to us that Wilson had been neglected and possibly abused in his previous life. During the 3 months he was in foster care, he gained weight and self-confidence, experienced what it was like to sleep on the couch and learned how to follow his favorite toy, a tennis ball, when it was thrown. However, his seizures worsened in frequency and severity until they became uncontrollable. At that point, it was decided that it was in Wilson's best interest to send him to the Bridge. This award is being created to recognize and encourage those Rescue Golden Retrievers and their owners who have provided their dogs the opportunity to compete and excel in any event open to them. Although Wilson never had this opportunity, he will, in a way, live on in the accomplishments of the other Rescue Golden Retrievers. (See 2007 recipients on Page 3)

*"Saving one dog will not change the world, but, surely for that one dog  
the world will change forever." -Unknown*



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*The Golden Nuggets will be published on a quarterly basis. Articles, questions, photos should be submitted by the following dates in order to appear in the next quarterly issue:*

*May 16, 2008  
August 15, 2008  
November 14, 2008*

## From The President's Desk

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By Nancy Kiesler

This is a memorable moment – the first edition of our newsletter, **Golden Nuggets**. Thinking about this reminds me of how I felt when I stood in the vast audience at my son's graduation from Washington State University several years ago. My emotions ran the gamut from disbelief (I can't believe he did it!) to excitement (he finally did it!) to apprehension (now what will he do??). I find these same feelings floating through my head when I think of EGRR.

Golden Retriever Rescue functioned for many years under the umbrella of Seattle Purebred Dog Rescue (SPDR). I started out as a foster home assisting then Breed Representative **Roz Helton**. The two of us were Rescue for several years until Roz stepped down at which time I worked alone for 14 months. It became very evident that it was much more work than one person could manage so I recruited help from the membership of the Evergreen Golden Retriever Club (EGRC) and several people stepped forward. As our work became better known and recognized, others volunteered so that in 1996 we numbered approximately 10 volunteers. Many people have held the position of Breed Representative and each brought special talents to the job and left their legacy of growth and progress.

As we grew in size and knowledge, it gradually became apparent that we could best serve the needs of our wonderful breed by becoming an independent organization. The first step was to decide on a name. Evergreen Golden Retriever Rescue was chosen in 1998 along with our motto "Once Again Golden" which so aptly describes how we strive to make each of our dog's lives "Golden" again. Completing the paperwork for incorporation and applying for non-profit status is a time consuming project especially when combined with the regular rescue work. It therefore took until 2004 for EGRR to become incorporated in the state of Washington. 501c3 non-profit status was granted in 2005 and in that same year we placed our first dog, Copper, now King County's drug detection dog. Since then, each year has found more of the dogs being adopted under EGRR's name and this trend is expected to continue. Our volunteer ranks have swollen to number over 40. While we continue in our mutually beneficial relationship with SPDR, we are at the same time, with their encouragement, working toward our independence as we all agree that we can best meet the needs of our breed by functioning in this fashion.

As in life, Rescue has been an interesting, at times challenging and stressful, journey but well worth the effort. The joy, most obviously represented by the 1000's of dogs whose lives have been changed forever as well as the immeasurable happiness brought to their new families, is too great to measure. It is simply what keeps our volunteers doing what at times is demanding work. It also, I believe, changes one forever, for the better. As we look toward the future and the challenges it will present for us, we are reminded that there is still much work to be done and far too many dogs whose lives are not yet "Golden". I invite you to join us on this journey and allow your life to be changed.

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# Wilson Award

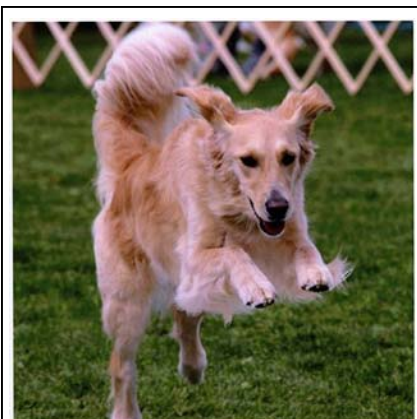
## Rescue Dog Earning A Title

Donated by Allan & Nancy Kiesler

*Congratulations*



2007 Recipients  
Suzanne Bolwell—Clay & Diane Murphy—Allan Kiesler



Princess Sandy Underfoot  
Allan & Nancy Kiesler



Grants's Samantha Star RN  
Clay & Diane Murphy



U-CDX Greets The Sun Sinjon UD, RE, Can UD  
Suzanne Bolwell

## From the Vet's Desk ———

### Understanding Canine Obesity And Weight Management

By

Kent Thomazin DVM  
Animal Hospital of Newport Hills

One of the most common health problems that dog owners face is obesity in their pets. The causes of this problem are multifactorial and, just as in people, weight loss and management require an understanding of basic nutrition and behaviors that contribute weight gain in pets.

Let's look at factors that will contribute to weight gain in pets. Most pets are neutered by the time they are 6-12 months of age, as is recommended almost universally by veterinarians. While the benefits of neutering are numerous and significantly contribute to an animal's well being and longevity, there is one major drawback. Animals that have been neutered have a 25-30% decrease in energy needs. Neutered dogs are 3-4 times more likely to be obese if diet is not managed immediately. The feeding recommendations found on commercial dog foods are based on the mean energy requirements for young, INTACT, active dogs. Another contributing factor is that most dogs become physically mature by the time they are 2-3 years of age. Once they are no longer physically growing, their mean energy requirements decrease by another 10-15% (think how you could eat as a teenager!). So without changing the type or volume of food that you are feeding, by the time your neutered pet is 3-4 years of age, you are feeding 25-40% more calories than is required for maintenance of body weight. This is how we start down the path to obesity.

Excess body fat has long been recognized as placing additional mechanical stress on joints and increased cardiac workload. Fat cells can shrink, hypertrophy or proliferate, but once new cells are made, they do not go away or die as other cells do. Once thought to be passive energy storage, adipose tissue is now recognized as an important endocrine organ that actively secretes hormones. These mediators result in chronic, systemic, mild inflammation and promote insulin resistance. Obesity is a self-potentiating

metabolic state that unaddressed contributes to significant health problems as the animal ages. It has been demonstrated that dogs that have a "lean to ideal" body condition live on average 23 months longer than non-calorie restricted counterparts.

So how do we address this growing problem in dogs? First, we must take responsibility for nutritional decisions that we make for our pets. Food does not equal love. Unlike humans, dogs have absolutely no ability to make a correlation between what they eat and their long term well-being. Most dogs need to be fed MEASURED volumes 2-3 times daily of a calorie restricted diet. Any treats or table scraps need to be included in the animal's total daily calorie intake, and this is where most people get into trouble. A dog that solicits attention is not necessarily begging for food, and by rewarding the behavior with food, you are inadvertently reinforcing the behavior and contributing to the cycle of weight gain.

There are many options for weight management in dogs. Most dogs simply require increased exercise and calorie restriction. There are dogs that truly have underlying metabolic disorders that contribute to weight gain (hypothyroidism, Cushing's Disease), but the vast majority of obese dogs simply have too great of a daily calorie intake. Please consult your veterinarian if you are concerned that your dog is overweight. Be proactive in preventing weight gain. I will address recommendations for dieting and weight loss in the following newsletter. Please feel free to contact me with questions, feedback or suggestions for topics in future articles.

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## Memorial Donations

Scott and Karen Rohrer  
In memory of  
Duncan and Dominique Randall

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EGRR is a 501c3 organization. Donations are tax deductible so please consider helping us in our efforts. If your employer will match your donation, consider EGRR in your charitable giving.

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