



SPOTLIGHT ON RESCUE

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A New Life for 18 Dogs in Need

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In March of 2017, Friends of Flicka was contacted by Retrieve a Golden of Minnesota (RAGOM), who had learned of a commercial breeding auction taking place that weekend in Missouri. Ten Golden Retrievers were up for auction.

Without intervention, the 10 dogs would be sold to other commercial breeders, where they would continue to live their lives in cages while being bred repeatedly. The advertisement for one of the dogs boasted that she had whelped 49 puppies in the last five litters and was soon due back in heat.

RAGOM and other Golden rescue organizations who watch for auctions collaborated to determine the best strategy for saving the dogs. The groups often work together to save resources and share ideas. They decided that RAGOM would focus on this particular auction, and Sooner Golden Retriever Rescue agreed to focus on future upcoming auctions.

RAGOM was determined to save the ten dogs, but this rescue effort was over their budget. They would not be able to rescue them all. Difficult choices would have to be made at the auction as to who would be chosen and who would be left behind.

Friends of Flicka wanted to help them all.

Advertisement from the auction

Golden Retriever

193 FE Peanut Delight J15-VS-BN-31581M 5/20/15 #5 J. Borntreger Comments:APRI Reg. Color:Golden - LLW: 12/5/16, she had 4 pups. First time mother, good mother. Due back in heat on 4/3/17. Due in heat 3/30/17. Great with People.

194 FE Parkers Golden Harley Beth SR71522308 12/11/11 #10 Ab. Borntreger 933000220000368 Comments:AKC Reg. Color: Golden - She whelped 49 puppies the last 5 litters. She's a really good mom, she is shy. Due back in heat on June 2nd. AKC certified pedigree.

195 FE Feldmann's Kara SR65815603 11/30/10 #16 Schlessman 097-281-370 Comments:AK-C,APRI Reg. Color:Light Golden -

196 FE Felmann's Vickie SR63760804 7/9/10 #16 Schlessman 048-290-088 Comments:AKC,A-PRI Reg. Color: Light Golden -

197 FE Feldmann Rosie Pose SR62577206 5/2/10 #16 Schlessman 048-296-585 Comments:AKC Reg. Color:Golden -

Not long before being contacted by RAGOM, Friends of Flicka had lost a special friend, "Yogi Bear," who had passed away after 11 wonderful years sharing his unconditional love. In his honor, Friends of Flicka wanted to do something special.

RAGOM estimated the cost to rescue all of the dogs would be at least \$10,000. Friends of Flicka made a \$12,000

contribution with a commitment to send up to \$3,000 more, with one request: do everything possible to bring home *all* of the Golden.

With just a few days to prepare, RAGOM sprung into action. Volunteers organized an auction plan and secured the necessary equipment. Families signed up to foster the dogs once they were rescued. Volunteers Denise A. and Scott B.



“Yogi Bear,” the Golden that inspired the rescue that liberated 18 dogs from a puppy mill auction.

drove to Missouri to attend the auction.

When the day came, RAGOM and Friends of Flicka waited on pins and needles, knowing it could be hours before news came from Missouri. While we expected at least some of the Golden Retrievers would be rescued, we knew that despite best efforts, RAGOM might not be able to rescue them all. Sometimes at auctions, if the commercial breeders know that rescue organizations are bidding, they’ll work together to drive up the prices.

According to Friends of Flicka co-founder Jim Seidl, “That afternoon, we received the news. Our friends at RAGOM joyfully reported they were able to rescue all 10 Golden Retrievers. And even better, with Friends of Flicka’s support, RAGOM was able to use additional funds they had to rescue a Goldendoodle mom and her seven puppies. For the first time in their lives, these 18 dogs were going home.”

RAGOM had additional news. One of the Golden Retrievers was in need of a name, and they had the perfect one in mind. This wonderful 8-month-old dog was given the name “Yogi,” in honor of the dog that made their rescue possible. And another of the puppies was named “Jim,” after Friends of Flicka’s Jim Seidl, a lover of all things Golden.

We couldn’t have dreamed of a more perfect story.

Back in Missouri, volunteers loaded the dogs into vans and began the long drive home. They arrived late that Saturday night, where they were greeted by a team of volunteers who were eager to help with the dogs’ intake. Baths were given, paperwork completed, and love was shared. They worked through the night to take care of each dog.

Early the next day, foster volunteers prepared to meet the dogs they would be welcoming into their homes. But first, RAGOM had invited Jim Seidl to come by, meet the dogs, and see firsthand what Friends of Flicka helped make possible.

The dogs settled in to their foster families, where they began to discover what life with a family was all about. They learned basic skills, like how to walk through doorways and up and down stairs, and discovered the joy of big yards to run in, toys to play with, and long walks with lots of opportunities

for sniffing.

The transition to life outside of a cage was easier for some dogs than for others. A couple weeks after her rescue, Beth, the dog listed in the auction ad as having birthed 49 puppies, slowly began to come out of her shell. Each night her foster dad gently rubbed lavender oil onto her neck, and she began to trust this kind gesture. She began treatment for whipworms, tapeworms, and double ear infections, and was comfortable enough with her foster family that they were able to trim her very long toenails.

Young Yogi quickly began to thrive under the care of his foster family, and loves all of the opportunities he now has to run and play. A few weeks after his rescue, he was adopted by a wonderful family who will see to it that all of his days are golden. Ashley W., Yogi’s foster mom, was glad to be a part of Yogi’s journey. “Yogi cannot stop smiling and neither can we! Yogi is truly a gift to this world and we can’t wait to hear how his life is with his forever family.”

For everyone involved at RAGOM and Friends of Flicka, this rescue mission was special. “Receiving a call from Amy the afternoon of the auction with the great but unexpected news that RAGOM had successfully rescued all the dogs ... it was a moment I’ll never forget,” said Friend of Flicka co-founder Jim Seidl. “I knew RAGOM had gone to previous auctions, and while both organizations would celebrate the dogs we were able to rescue, it had always been tempered by the sadness that we’d left some dogs behind. To know that all of these dogs were going to have wonderful homes – it was pretty special.”



Jim Seidl of Friends of Flicka greets Yogi Bear’s namesake soon after his rescue from the puppy mill auction. Friends of Flicka raised and donated enough funds to ensure RAGOM was able to rescue all 10 of the mill dogs available at auction.

Auction volunteer Denise A. explained, “Knowing we had enough money to purchase all of the Golden Retrievers was an enormous relief. I was able to walk through the kennel runs and tell each Golden they were coming with me. I was so relieved to know they would be safe in just a few hours. There are no words to describe how thankful I am for the generosity of Friends of Flicka. So many lives were changed because of their help.” ❖