THE heart OF HOMEWARD BOUND

NOV 2026 / VOL 27, ISSUE 4

HOMEWARD BOUND GOLDEN RETRIEVER RESCUE AND SANCTUARY, INC.

What's Inside

Archie's case marks a medical first for Homeward Bound. Though his paws are small, his heart and courage are immense! This sweet boy's journey is our cover story.

Stranger danger is a common challenge for dogs that have missed crucial socialization. The good news is that it can be overcome. On page 6, read how a few well-practiced steps helped Teddy find his forever home.

Unsocialized, shy dogs present a different set of challenges, often addressed through foster care. One of our shy dog fosters shares her experiences and tips on page 7.

November is National Adopt a Senior Pet Month. On page 9, explore the many advantages that senior pets can offer their adopters.

And now, drumroll please…our Kennel Renovation campaign wrap-up is on page 4. Your incredible generosity exceeded our wildest expectations and will ensure the best accommodations for our waiting dogs. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to making this campaign such a huge success!

PLEASE PASS ALONG!

You can help us to expand our reach by sharing our newsletter with friends, family, and co-workers! Thank you!



Archie: Small Paws, Big Courage

By: Audrey Farrington

In September, we received an inquiry through our Compassionate Care program, which helps good dogs stay in good homes. The owner of a 12-week-old puppy reached out to Colorado for surgical support, only to discover help was in her own backyard at Homeward Bound.

Archie has a condition called Persistent Right Aortic Arch (PRAA). During normal canine embryonic development, a series of blood vessels called aortic arches form around the trachea and the esophagus. In a healthy puppy, the right aortic arch naturally regresses while the left arch develops into the main aorta. In fetuses that develop PRAA, the right aortic arch wrongly persists instead of breaking down. This creates a tight vascular ring that traps and constricts the esophagus. Food cannot pass easily to the stomach,

Continued on page 3



Our Mission

Homeward Bound Golden Retriever Rescue & Sanctuary, Inc. is an all-volunteer organization which rescues and heals displaced, abandoned, and homeless Golden Retrievers and Golden mixes, regardless of their age or health. Homeward Bound secures safe, loving homes through a comprehensive adoption program, and also provides lifetime sanctuary for Goldens that cannot be adopted.

Homeward Bound also provides education on proper animal care and on the benefits of, and need for, rescue and sanctuary. In the event of a disaster, Homeward Bound will provide assistance to other rescue groups and the families of dogs impacted by the disaster.

Homeward Bound will continue to serve as a model rescue organization, addressing animal welfare needs throughout California and neighboring states, and strives to be a national leader in rescue, sanctuary and education.

DOGS RESCUED TO DATE 2026
312

VET EXPENSES TO DATE 2026
$520,010





A Message from Our President

In some ways, the year is ending as it started…with a flood of dogs. After a relatively quiet summer, the toll of the current economy is palpable. Families are being torn apart—some forced from their homes, others facing difficult choices that leave them unable to care for their beloved pets. This is where we come in, ready to extend a helping hand to both the dogs and the people who love them.

In another way, the year ends on a completely different note. Judy and Tom Kent are preparing to step into a new chapter of their lives in Wyoming. Their journey had been delayed, giving us more time to prepare and invaluable opportunities to grow under Judy's watchful eye. As they head off to their new adventure, we send them our heartfelt wishes for their well-deserved adventure, just in time to embrace those beautiful Wyoming winters!

In this time of transition, some things remain constant:

The outpouring of generosity from our **Supporters** whose kindness makes stories like Archie's possible, and who helped us exceed our kennel renovation goal beyond our wildest expectation.

Adopters who open their hearts and homes to pups in need, offering them the second chances they so richly deserve.

And our **Volunteers**, the backbone of our organization, who embody an incredible spirit of compassion, showing up time and again to ensure that every dog in our care knows love, health and hope.

These three pillars truly represent the heart and soul of Homeward Bound. I cannot express enough how deeply grateful I am to each of you. Your unwavering dedication and compassion inspire us to keep pushing forward, knowing that together, we are changing lives. Thank you for being the light in our mission and for helping us create a brighter future for these deserving dogs. Each of you makes a world of difference, and I am honored to walk this path with you.

Audrey Farrington
President

Archie's Story, Continued from page 1



causing the esophagus to stretch and balloon above the heart and leading the puppy to regurgitate instead, a condition called Megaesophagus. The puppy's growth is stunted despite a huge appetite, and it risks aspiration pneumonia, when food accidentally enters the lungs.

We initially thought the owner was only seeking financial support, but intake revealed the intention was to surrender him. It was for the best, as the owner's dogs lived outside in kennels. We believe that all dogs need more than that. Archie needed much more.

A CT scan confirmed the diagnosis, and Archie underwent successful surgery a few days after his arrival, removing the band that constricted his esophagus. He went home with a devoted foster who gained her puppy experience raising CCI puppies. He needed several weeks of eating slurry upright in a makeshift Bailey chair or being held upright for 20 minutes after eating - his preference as it meant typically falling asleep in his foster's arms. During this recovery period, the hope is that his esophagus will strengthen enough for him to eat normally.

In every other way, Archie is a normal puppy, and that was the early challenge. He had a foot-long incision and needed to be kept calm. Puppies and calm don't often go together. Archie desperately tried to get the two senior dogs in the home to engage with comical antics, but they only rolled their eyes and went back to napping. He loves everyone he meets and is sure that all visitors have come specifically to meet him! He wants to be wherever the people are and is an expert snuggler. In addition to needed socialization, Archie has had a chance to work on his house and potty manners and is making great strides.

Archie's surgeon, Dr. Katrina Castaneda, DVM, DACVS-SA, is thrilled with his progress. As this goes to press, he is in the process of transitioning to solid food. While he may always need to eat from an elevated bowl, success means that he won't have to eat sitting up. Altogether, his surgery and follow-up costs exceed $16,000. Is he worth it? Absolutely.



The future looks bright for a puppy that might otherwise not have had one at all. We're delighted that this adorable boy found his way to Homeward Bound.



Mission Paws-ible: Kennel Renovation Campaign Wrap-up!

Your support means everything to us and to the dogs we serve. We are deeply grateful for your incredible generosity during our Kennel Renovation fundraising campaign, which allowed us to exceed our goal in ways we never thought possible. The dogs and the volunteers are jumping for joy!

A special thank you goes to our **Big House Project Sponsor, Dr. Jay, Kathy and Emma Griffiths** and to our Individual Kennel Sponsors. Your kindness, along with the support of many other donors, has lifted us above and beyond our targeted goal.

And thanks to a **very special benefactor,** we have even more exciting news to share. Instead of reinstalling 10-year-old refurbished kennels, we can now replace them with new, more modern, and more functional kennels. This will ensure our beloved dogs experience the utmost comfort and care they deserve. Their extraordinary contribution was **dedicated to all the Homeward Bound pups, especially in honor of their cherished dogs—Sunny, Auggie, Summer, and Maizie, and the love they gave to their family.**

We will also repurpose some of the old kennels that remain in decent condition within our modular space. One of these will become a new double-wide kennel specifically for bonded pairs, allowing them to stay comfortably together during their stay with us.

The project is planned for next May – after winter rains and before summer heat. Contracts have been signed and materials secured while our facilities team is hard at work weather-proofing outdoor spaces for any dogs not able to go to foster, boarding, or housed elsewhere on the property during the project. You can bet that for a couple of weeks, every nook and cranny will be filled with dogs waiting to get into their new digs!

This achievement has far surpassed our wildest dreams, and we are truly humbled by your heartfelt love, care, and generosity for these wonderful dogs. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts to everyone who played a part in making this campaign such a remarkable success.

Following, please find a list of our major donors, kennel sponsors, and donors with gifts exceeding $250.00. We are so deeply grateful for every gift, no matter the size, and the difference they will make to countless Goldens in search of their next chapter and home. Thank you!













Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

Because of You: Kennel Renovation Acknowledgments

We are grateful for the many gifts, large and small, that made our campaign such a success - with special acknowledgment to the following:

Special Benefactors

An anonymous donor whose generous gift is dedicated to all the Homeward Bound pups, especially in honor of their cherished dogs—Sunny, Auggie, Summer, and Maizie, and the love they gave to their family.

Big House Project Sponsor

Dr. Jay, Kathy and Emma Griffiths

Kennel Sponsors

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Julie Sullivan
Karen T Campbell
Karyn Dunn
Katherine and Jim Hrundas
Peter Bennett
Priscilla Schroeder
Richard Campagna
Rob Johnson
Robert Rosenbloom



Online Training Library

Great dogs aren't born – they are made through love, care, and especially training. Education is the core of our mission and helps to keep good dogs in good homes.

On our website, under Resources, you will find a comprehensive training library of step-by-step tools to address a wide range of challenges. From potty training, to addressing juvenile delinquent behaviors like mouthing, jumping, and pulling. It also addresses more complex challenges, including poop eating, resource guarding, reactivity, separation anxiety, and more.

You'll also find fun games, health, and dog care tips. So, before you consult Dr. Google or AI, check out the free tools on our site from recognized experts in positive-reinforcement behavior training.



Overcoming Stranger Danger



Dogs are a highly social species. They communicate through body language that can look subtle to us but is clear to other dogs. As dogs become more upset, their body language changes, and they move up a "ladder of communication," a series of steps dogs typically show when stressed or fearful. When these early warning signs are ignored, or the threat level intensifies, dogs escalate their behavior. When we know how to "listen," we can recognize early signs of escalating reactions, allowing us to de-escalate and work through it by changing the situation, training, or both. If these early signs are ignored, the dog moves to more obvious signals, ending with the ones we are more familiar with, such as growling, snapping, and biting. This escalation can happen quickly or over time if the signs are continually ignored.

If early behaviors on the ladder are ignored (lip licking, turning head away, etc.) but growling proves effective, dogs can learn to switch straight to this response.

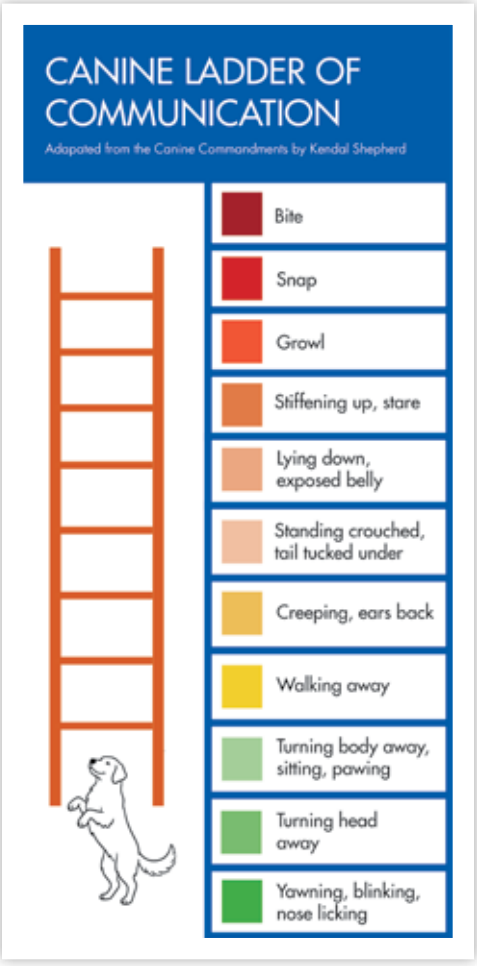
Stranger danger falls into this category: a dog's intense reaction to strangers entering the home or in public. We are seeing more of this at Homeward Bound – the result of dogs not being properly socialized early on. It is one of the more challenging behaviors for a dog at our rescue, where they encounter many different volunteers daily. Importantly, you should never punish growling. It is a natural way for dogs to indicate that they are uncomfortable. A dog that has been punished for growling may bite with less warning.

Teddy (above) who was recently adopted after almost a year with us, is a great example of a dog with stranger danger. He was surrendered at age one. While he had lived with a family, he spent most of his time outside with very little interaction or socialization outside that small world.

When he first arrived, he would allow only two select team members in the yard with him. No eye contact. No close proximity. It took time to get him comfortable even being leashed, running him in and out of the kennel instead. Over time, he came to trust a small group of volunteers. With others, he would escalate quickly, staring, then growling and lunging. We needed to better understand what made him so uncomfortable, and a protocol to expand his world if we had any hope of getting him adopted. All dogs are individuals. Teddy didn't show all behaviors on the ladder, and he didn't follow the steps in order. But the behavior he learned, warning people away, worked for him. To be successful, we needed to interrupt that behavior, provide him with enriching alternative experiences that built trust, and learn through observation how to create a more successful introduction approach.

For Teddy, the routine began with rewards to help overcome barrier reactivity (fence or leash), a calm introduction from a trusted human, and an unthreatening approach without demand, culminating in passing the leash to a new friend. It took time, patience, and lots of practice. Throughout the process, it was vital to watch Teddy's body language and take a step back at the first hint of discomfort. But by the time Teddy was ready to go home, he welcomed his new adopters and allowed an entire team into his circle to see him off.

The best way to prevent stranger danger is to socialize a dog early in its life to new people and places. If you are late to the game or adopt a dog already showing the behavior, work with a certified professional dog trainer skilled in stranger danger and using reward-based training methods.



The Other Side of Golden

By: Elise Paugh



When most people think of Golden Retrievers, they picture a happy dog who loves everyone and everything, approaching life with endless enthusiasm. For a lot of Goldens, that's true! But every so often, Homeward Bound welcomes a Golden who wants absolutely nothing to do with any of that. Those are the dogs I love to foster.

I've brought home dogs who were terrified of leashes, afraid to step outside, or so overwhelmed that they just stopped moving altogether. One foster was so scared when I picked her up from Homeward Bound that I had to carry her from her kennel to my car. For the first few days at our house, she barely moved. Every once in a while, she would come over and rest her head on us or curl up next to Gibson, one of my Goldens. I loved seeing those little glimpses of her personality, and we started building on them. Soon she was exploring the house, going on short walks, and giving Gibson a run for his money! Then we had a guest over for dinner, and she went right back to being the terrified dog I had picked up; we were back to square one. Progress is rarely linear, and sometimes something that seems completely ordinary to us can be a really big deal to them.

When you're fostering dogs like these, progress doesn't always look the way you'd expect. Obedience training, leash manners, and even house training can take a backseat for a while. There's just not much point in teaching a dog to sit when they're still trying to figure out whether the floor is lava. I'm much more interested in getting them comfortable enough to think, make choices, and actually enjoy being a dog. Watching a shy foster decide on their own to explore the backyard, investigate a new toy, or come over for affection is genuinely exciting to me. Those are the moments when I know we're getting somewhere.

Of course, we can't just sit around waiting for these dogs to come out of their shells. Some need a little encouragement, others need space, and, sometimes, we get it wrong. Thankfully, I have a pretty good



team at home. Gibson and Woody have become excellent at showing our fosters the ropes, and my partner, who had never owned a dog before we met, has gotten pretty good at reading them, too. Every dog seems to pick their own favorite. Some follow me everywhere, some gravitate toward my partner, and others decide Gibson or Woody are the only ones worth paying attention to. We've had dogs who wouldn't eat unless I sat on the floor beside them, and others who needed to watch Gibson climb onto the couch before trying it themselves. There's a lot of trial and error involved, especially when we know so little about where these dogs have come from. But figuring out what works for each of them is half the fun!

That's probably my favorite part of all of this. The dog who wouldn't come near me at Homeward Bound eventually becomes my shadow, sitting on my feet while I work. Another who was depressed and on hunger strike in the kennel turns out to be the most sassy couch companion who insists on being included in everything. There's so much personality hiding behind that initial fear and getting to see it come out is one of the reasons I keep taking these dogs home. And they keep me on my toes! Just when I think I've gotten pretty good at reading them, another foster comes along and reminds me I still have plenty to learn.

The question I get asked most about fostering is, "How do you not keep them all?" I think that's one of the biggest reasons people hesitate to foster in the first place. They worry they'll get too attached, or that saying goodbye will be too hard. And, of course, I get attached! We spend weeks or months with these dogs, getting to know all their quirks, celebrating their progress, and making them part of our everyday lives. But I've never really looked at adoption as the sad part. One of my favorite things about fostering is getting to know who these dogs really are, sometimes long before



Puppy Fosters Needed

Puppies like Archie, our cover story dog, can be supported thanks to puppy fosters, something in short supply these days. We are looking for dedicated people with big hearts and flexible schedules who can step up for short- or long-term puppy fostering. Most are straightforward; the kids need a safe, caring place to land while we get them ready for forever homes. Others, like Archie, are more complicated and require a longer commitment and the ability to follow up with medical care. Our foster, adoption, and medical team members support both. Except in extreme medical rehabilitations, it is actually beneficial for puppies to be socialized to little humans, other dogs, and even kitties.

Fosters need the flexibility to work from home or have a home backup to support a puppy's potty and feeding needs. The best part? The joy of loving on a puppy without dealing with juvenile delinquency. The reward? Puppy kisses and snuggles! Can you help? Complete a foster application on our website. Thank you!



Planned Giving: A Golden Legacy

Bequests have played a major role in our ability to purchase the property and to support much needed improvements.

Estate or planned gifts to Homeward Bound Golden Retriever Rescue are excellent opportunities to create a legacy ensuring the rescue's permanence and that more Golden lives are saved. Planned giving is an option for donors of all incomes and may allow you to make a larger gift in the future than you otherwise could from current assets. A planned gift can also help you reduce capital gains or estate taxes on your heirs.

Naming us in your will or trust is one of the easiest ways to ensure that future generations of Goldens in need will find a second chance at life. You'll find more information on our website under "Donate."

The Other Side of Golden, Continued from page 7

they're comfortable showing that side of themselves to anyone else.

My job is to take what we've learned about them and help figure out what kind of home they'll be happiest in. Maybe that's a home with another confident dog, a quieter household, or someone who's willing to give them a little extra time to settle in. By the time they're ready for adoption, I want their new family to know not just what scares them, but what makes them happy, what helps them feel safe, and all the little things that make them who they are. Just because it is a goodbye for me, it isn't the end of their story. In a lot of ways, it's when things are just getting started.



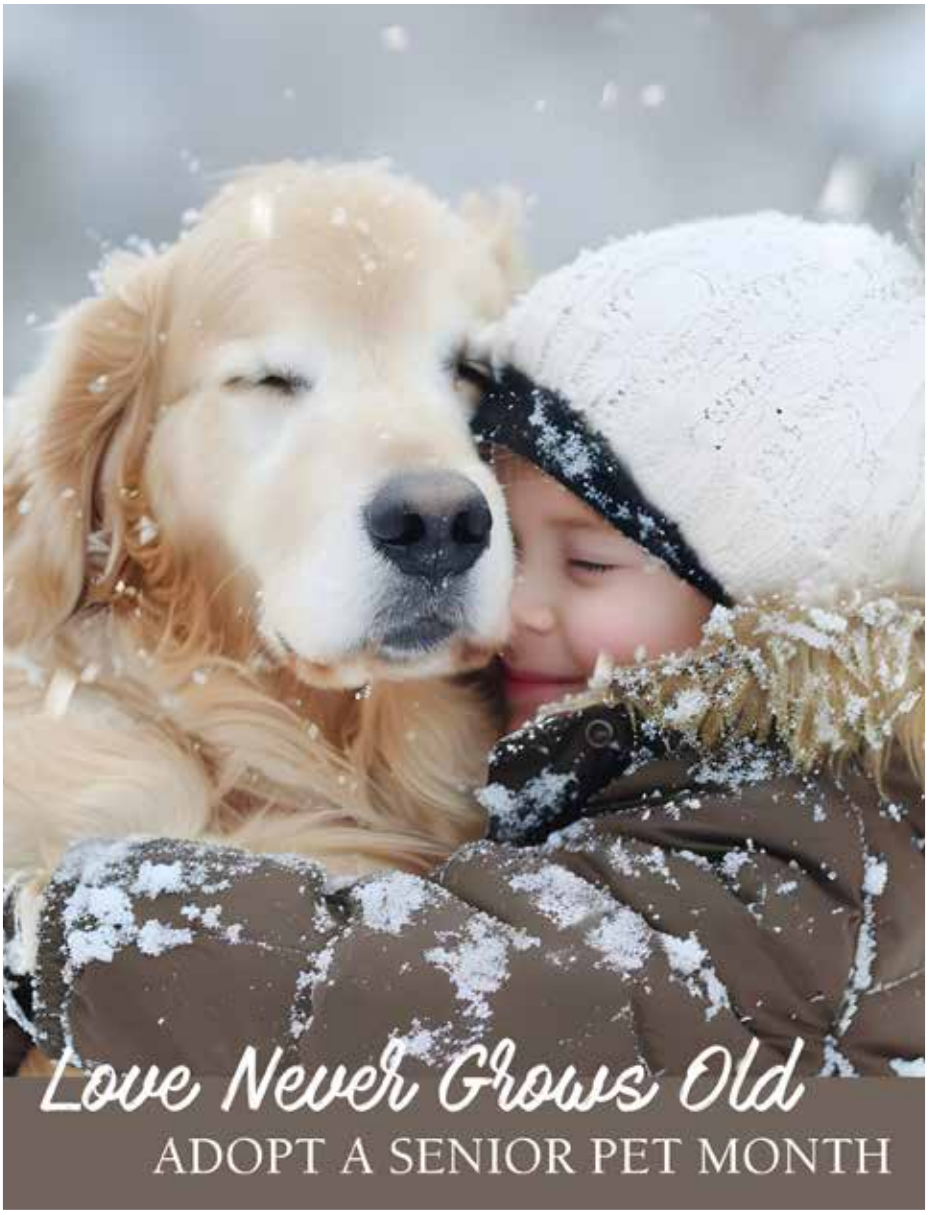
HOMEWARD BOUND Golden Retriever Rescue

Platinum Transparency 2026
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Love Never Grows Old



November is National Adopt a Senior Pet Month. If you are lucky enough to have your young dog grow old with you, or you adopt a golden oldie, you know the unique joys of a senior dog. Along with the sugar face and slower steps comes gentle companionship. Yes – there will be changes in abilities and health needs ahead. But if you're considering adoption, the advantages to bringing home an older dog are clear.

Loyalty. Seniors are often overlooked or at high risk of euthanasia at shelters. A rescued senior may sense they have been saved. After a period of adjustment, you can see them relax into safety and care, returning your kindness with deep loyalty and appreciation.

Fewer Lifestyle Changes. Forget about the 2+ years of puppy zoomies, chewing, and destruction. You don't need to puppy-proof your life. Senior pets are generally mellow, relaxed, and fit easily into your home. Senior dogs have learned many of life's lessons. For example, most know that shoes are for walking and bones are for chewing.

WYSIWYG - What you see is what you get. When you meet your senior dog, you will get an immediate sense of their well-developed personality. With permanence may come some changes – typically for the better. As your senior dog settles in and feels comfortable at home, the positives that attracted you to them are likely to be accentuated.

Easy Does It. Most senior pets don't demand the same time and attention as younger dogs. As we age, we all slow down. Long romps and hyper fun turn into casual walks, shorter play time, and an appreciation of naps! Many senior pets snooze the day away inside while you work, then wait calmly at the door for you when you return home.

Natural Stress Relief. Studies show that petting a dog for just 15 minutes boosts the so-called "feel-good" hormones serotonin, prolactin, and oxytocin, and even lowers blood pressure by 10 percent, reducing the stress of our hectic lives. Leisurely walks and gentle play with your senior dog may also encourage you to take a break and exercise for a few minutes, even on your busiest days.

Old Dog, New Tricks. Senior dogs can learn new tricks. In fact, adult dogs are often easier to train than younger canines specifically because they aren't as active. Older dogs aren't as easily distracted as pups and can focus longer. This ability to concentrate helps them learn new routines more easily while providing mental stimulation. Time shared while learning new tricks will deepen the bond you have with your canine friend.

Companionship For All. Senior pets make wonderful companions for people of all ages, but especially for senior humans who often feel isolated. Dogs give us a reason to get out and interact with others, helping to keep hearts young. They also make excellent therapy dogs - paying their good fortune forward.

Adopt a senior. Save a life. And change two lives, yours and theirs, forever.

Light Up The Homeward Bound Giving Tree!



The 16th Annual Giving Tree will be ready to decorate online beginning Thanksgiving weekend!

This heartfelt tradition has become a wonderful way for us to celebrate the holidays together. It's the perfect opportunity to remember a loved one—human or canine—honor a special friend or volunteer, or simply share your passion for rescue.

When you donate to the Giving Tree, in honor or in memory of your special someone, you're giving a heartfelt gift that helps all the dogs who need our help on their journeys home.

For donations of $10 or more, you can help us decorate our Giving Tree. Place a virtual light, ornament, or package under our Tree in honor, or in memory of, friends, family, or pets. The honoree will receive a beautiful certificate from Homeward Bound that shares your gift and includes a link to the online Tree with your posted message. You will warm the honoree's heart while helping Homeward Bound continue to take in, provide medical care, and place hundreds of dogs each year.

The Giving Tree is our final annual fundraising effort and represents a third of the funds we raise to support the dogs. The Tree will be ready to light and decorate on Thanksgiving weekend. **Look for it on our website at www.hbgrr.org.** It's incredible to watch your gifts turn our bare Tree into a bright light every holiday season.

Please join us in making this the most memorable year ever!

Our Wishlists for the Holidays!

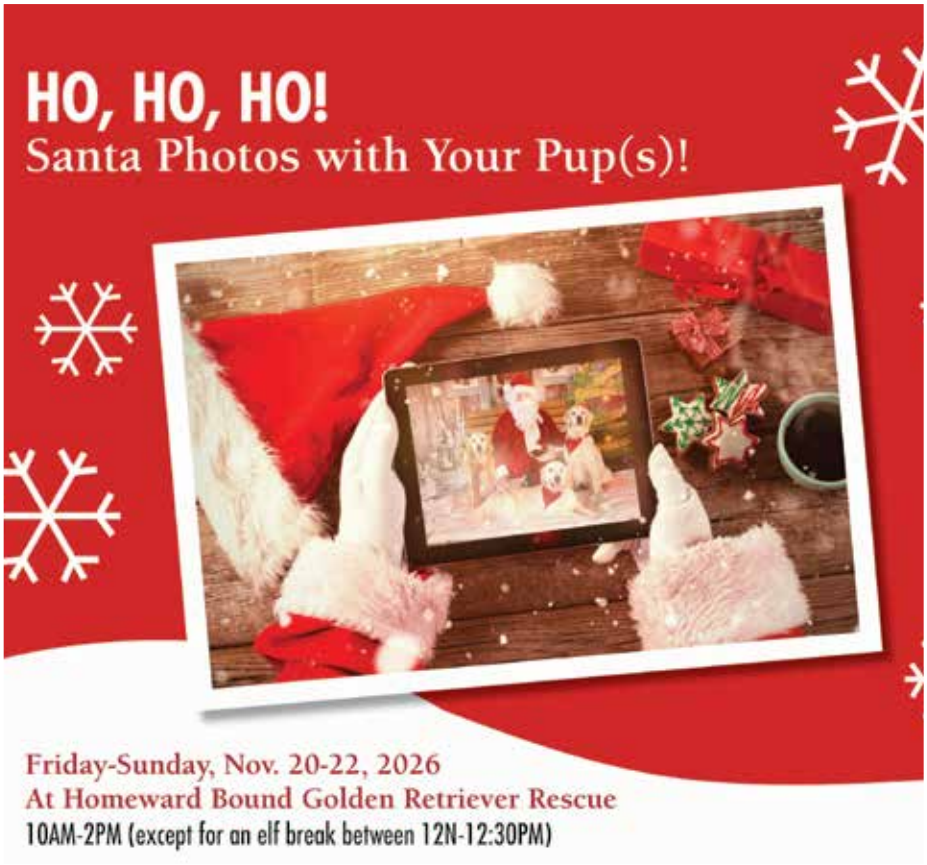
Spreading holiday cheer to the dogs is as easy as shopping our wishlists! We maintain two - one at Amazon and the other at Chewy. On both, you will find frequently used (and sometimes abused...as in toys!) items that are always in demand.

The links are easy to find on our website. Just click on Donate on the navigation menu and scroll down. And don't forget to include a gift card so we know who to thank!

amazon wishlist

chewy.com Wishlist





Santa Returns to Homeward Bound!

Santa has once again made time in his busy schedule to kick off the holidays with you and your pup(s)! Join us for Santa Photos at Homeward Bound!

For a $20 donation, you'll get:

- A fabulous photographer to capture the magic
- A winter backdrop that's totally Instagram-worthy
- Adorable doggie scarves and holiday gear to make your pup look festive
- Homemade cookies for pups and their humans

And that's not all! Your stunning Santa Photos will be ready for super-speedy download, **thanks to KLJ Studios, pet photography experts!** So, don't wait!

Schedule your Santa Photos today because slots fill up faster than Santa's sleigh! We welcome drop-ins too but be prepared for a little wait.

Dates: Friday-Sunday, November 20-22
Location: Homeward Bound Golden Retriever Rescue, 7495 Natomas Rd., Elverta, CA
Time: 10AM-2PM each day (But note, Santa and his elves will be refueling from 12 PM - 12:30 PM, so there's a cookie break!)

To book your magical moment, simply send us an email at: kat@katbaines.com



How to Reach Us

Your help and ideas are always welcome! Contact team leaders below if you are interested in helping in any of these areas:

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Fostering
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Placement Team
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Golden Taxi (Transport)
goldentaxi@homewardboundgoldens.org

Volunteering
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HOMEWARD BOUND Golden Retriever Rescue

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Dates to Remember

Santa Photos - November 20-22 at Homeward Bound
The Giving Tree - Launches Thanksgiving Weekend

Help Wanted

Volunteer Positions Currently in High Demand:
• **Feeders:** A dog's best friend and so rewarding!
• **Walkers:** Build bonds of trust through walking, playing, training, and grooming. Help prepare the dogs for their forever homes.
• **Vet Tranport Drivers:** Weekly runs for spay/neuter.
• **Puppy Fosters:** Be the bridge to a pup's forever home.

Our Golden Wish List

You can also shop our **Amazon and Chewy Wish Lists.** You'll find the links on our website!

For Our Goldens:
Nature's Select Dog Food (donate with your online purchase)
Large Pill Pockets
Dog Cookies
Rubber-backed Rugs
Amazon Gift Cards

Office Supplies
Postage Stamps
Professional Printing Services

General Maintenance & Laundry
Paper Towels
Garbage Bags (heavy duty & extra heavy duty)
Pooper Scoopers

Facilities Supplies
Lowes or Home Depot Gift Cards

For Landscaping & Our Memorial Garden
Green Acres Nursery Gift Certificates
Shredded Cedar Bark/Mulch

Printing of the Homeward Bound Newsletter is generously underwritten by Delta Print Group..