

# **PUPPY REFERRAL**

*Some Suggestions To Help Your Club Establish and Maintain a Quality  
Puppy Referral Program*

Golden Retriever Club of America

2005

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This manual was originally written by Anne McGuire, Ph.D., and was revised by the Golden Retriever Club of America (GRCA) Puppy Referral Task Group, with assistance from puppy referral personnel across the United States during 2004-2005. It is meant to serve as a resource which clubs may use to organize puppy referral services. Suggestions for improvement of this manual are always welcome and should be forwarded to the Chairman of the GRCA Puppy Referral Committee.

There are as many ways to structure a puppy referral program as there are member clubs doing puppy referral throughout the United States. The GRCA cannot tell you how to run your club's puppy referral program; however, we can offer suggestions and ideas based on the organization of member club programs that have proven successful. There are some common themes among the puppy referrals nation-wide. This manual will outline some of the different ideas used for puppy referral, make suggestions and identify common problems.

When developing a puppy referral program, it is of utmost importance to define a program that will work given the financial and manpower resources available to your club and area. Take into consideration the particular needs of your geographic region. Puppy referral is, if nothing else, a powerful public education tool. Public perceptions about buying a puppy may vary from region to region; each puppy referral should adapt their public education program to meet local needs.

## **ISSUES YOUR CLUB NEEDS TO CONSIDER**

### **1. What is Your Club's Purpose in Offering Puppy Referral?**

Does your club's puppy referral program exist primarily to serve breeders in the club by helping place their puppies? Or, is your club's puppy referral program primarily a public education service to assist consumers in your community to make educated decisions about buying a Golden Retriever puppy? Many clubs have internal conflicts among their members over puppy referral issues because of differing opinions about the above questions. Defining your club's goal and purpose in doing puppy referral, right from the start, may help avoid conflicts later on.

### **2. Where to Draw The Line?**

There is often temptation on the part of puppy referral volunteers to make puppy purchase decisions and judgments for callers, by directing them towards or away from specific breeders for various reasons. Problems arise within clubs if there is a sense that the puppy referral person is not treating all breeders equally, or that personal bias on the part of the referral person is affecting how referrals are made to the public. The puppy referral person should simply provide educational materials and referrals of all breeders that meet the standards set for that puppy referral program. It is up to the public how they use this educational information to make the best decision they can when buying a puppy.

It is not unusual for someone to call puppy referral personnel and ask, "Is this a good breeder?" or "Should I buy this puppy?" If the puppy referral person answers such questions, his club is then set up for potentially serious liability situations, depending on the answer. In addition, answering such questions can stir up conflict among breeder members of the club. It is often best if the puppy referral person can limit answers and advice to comments such as:

"Our club recommends that you buy only from someone with these characteristics (state the standards that your club has established for a breeder to be listed)". Hopefully, the club's standards are based on the GRCA's Code of Ethics and related breeding resolutions.

It is up to the consumer to decide if a given breeder/litter meets the referral program's standards as well as the consumer's needs. A puppy referral program might decide to avoid telling consumers about specific litters or breeders. It is often safest to suggest what consumers should look for in a breeder, without mentioning any specific breeder by name.

Some clubs are located in areas with particularly serious puppy mill problems and they need to find ways to educate callers without setting the club up for slander or libel lawsuits by naming specific individuals or businesses as “puppy mills”! It is possible to educate callers about what kind of place to avoid without naming specific names. If you do a good job of educating, buyers will recognize an unethical breeder when they see one.

### **3. Who Should Do Puppy Referral For Your Club?**

To avoid biasing the consumer, many clubs require the puppy referral person not be an active breeder, or at least not be planning to breed during the duration of their service as puppy referral representative. Some clubs have gone to the extreme of having a non-member, not involved in Golden Retrievers, do their puppy referral, or to use a voicemail-only system so that callers never talk to a person lest that person bias them in selecting a breeder. Other clubs define strict rules for breeders receiving puppy referral service and require that the puppy referral person give out referrals for every breeder or litter meeting the club’s requirements. Other clubs have only one or two breeder members and find it most convenient to assign puppy referral to one of their few breeder members.

### **4. One Person or a Committee?**

As an organization’s puppy referral program starts functioning, issues arise that require refinement. There may be problems with particular breeders or questions about clearances, etc. As an example, some eye reports may indicate problems that may or may not be hereditary, and a given report will not be marked “NORMAL,” but it would probably pass CERF. In this case, does the puppy referral person accept it or not? There may be times when a breeder applies for puppy referral services, and although they may not meet all your club’s requirements, the Puppy Referral volunteer may feel that they should receive referral services. A puppy referral committee can help decide when and how exceptions to the rules should be permitted. For this reason, it may help your club to establish a Puppy Referral Committee to convene when needed to help the puppy referral person make decisions when problems arise. In some member clubs, its Board of Directors votes on the puppy referral service policy when modifications or exceptions to rules are needed.

## **5. Supply versus Demand**

Know right from the start that almost every puppy referral person across the country reports the demand for healthy puppies far exceeds the supply. This is a problem for almost every club. There are no good solutions. No one is suggesting that breeders should produce more puppies just to meet consumer demand. Yet, it is hard to persuade callers to wait three to six months or more and pay the going rate (\$750-\$1,000) to get a companion animal, when they can buy an AKC-registered Golden Retriever puppy from a newspaper ad for \$250, and they can buy it today. This is the puppy referral person's real challenge.

Most puppy referrals also refer callers to the local Golden Retriever rescue program. At times when there simply are no puppies available, callers may wish to consider adopting a rescued adult Golden Retriever. Some callers, such as families with very young children, might be better suited to adopt an adult Golden rather than trying to raise a puppy.

## **WAYS TO STRUCTURE A PUPPY REFERRAL PROGRAM**

### **1. A Voicemail System or an Email Response System**

The majority of clubs have one person doing puppy referral and this person receives all calls on their home phone line. Increasingly, clubs are using voicemail systems, where all calls come in to a recording machine, and callers leave their name and phone number. One or more puppy referral volunteers can then share responsibilities for taking the messages and returning calls. Some clubs just have the caller leave an address and mail an information packet and referral list that contains a number to call if they still have unanswered questions. A variety of voicemail services are now available for fairly low cost, including using telephone company services, private companies, or even computer software that runs on your home computer.

The number one complaint from the referral people themselves seems to be the time spent on the phone and the invasion of their privacy by having puppy calls on their home phone. It varies from region to region, but puppy referral people receive from 1 to 60 calls per week. The number of calls varies seasonally; late spring and pre-Christmas are traditionally the busiest times of the year. It is not unusual for puppy referral people to get calls late at night, on holidays, even Christmas morning! One must remember that often the public does not know that they are calling an unpaid volunteer at home. They tend to think they are calling a business number.

Central voicemail systems have the advantage of making life easier for the referral person. The drawback is when people call looking for a puppy, 99% of them want a puppy now and by the time you return their call, there are high odds they will already have purchased a puppy, often from a less than “reputable” source.

Another option is an Email Response System. The puppy referral volunteer’s email address can be posted and puppy information packets can be sent by email. This may reduce the number of phone hours but it does prevent those without email service access to the puppy referral personnel. A combination system of phone and email often works best.

### **2. Public Education**

On average, puppy referral people spend about 15-20 minutes on the phone with a typical caller. This is not a lot of time to thoroughly educate someone about OFA, CERF, hereditary health problems, proper Golden temperament, how to recognize a reputable breeder versus a non-reputable puppy supplier, etc. Many clubs also mail out an education packet for more in-depth information. At least one puppy referral person refuses to talk to callers until they give her their address. She reasons that this way, if they hang up in outrage when they learn that a puppy is going to cost them \$700, at

least she can mail them educational literature and just maybe they will read it, and maybe they will learn something about buying a puppy

It is difficult for most callers to correctly remember all the details they are given in a 15-minute phone conversation with a puppy referral person. There is no substitute for the value of printed information that the would-be puppy buyer can read and re-read until they understand it. You can mail up to FIVE pages (8.5" x 11") on one postage stamp.

There are a variety of educational materials available. GRCA has the "Acquiring a Golden Retriever" booklet designed for educating puppy buyers. Clubs may obtain 50 free copies of "Acquiring a Golden Retriever" a year for puppy referral and 100 free copies a year for rescue. In addition, the GRCA has some one-page brochures on learning more about Golden Retrievers, including "**Questions To Ask Before You Buy a Puppy**". These are excellent Golden-specific materials. See Appendix 3 for information about ordering materials from GRCA and see Appendix 2 for contact addresses for ordering materials.

There are also many articles that may be freely copied and distributed, dealing with topics from puppy buying, to the importance of spay/neutering, to crate training, etc. You can obtain copies of some of these from the GRCA Public Education Chair.

The American Kennel Club (AKC) has a variety of educational materials. Contact the AKC to request copies (address in Appendix 2).

In addition, your club may want to include in its mail-out packet a written disclaimer that the club is providing a referral only, that it is the buyer's responsibility to check out every breeder and make their own decision about buying a puppy, and that any problems that arise with the puppy or from their purchase decision are not the responsibility of your club. Appendix 4 contains a generic disclaimer statement that you may use or modify to suit your club's needs.

One thing to be wary of is the temptation to include every article you can find in each information packet. After all, more is better, right? Not necessarily! Sometimes more is too much. A packet with too much information can be overwhelming to the recipient. They may not know where to start reading, or may think that it will take too long to read so they'll put it away for "later," with the end result that none of the material gets read. Two to three well-designed, well-written, informative articles are probably a good start for most people. You may wish to use one basic brochure or booklet for every caller, and add one or two other articles to address each caller's specific questions or needs. You can include an order form for additional brochures, or add a resource list with information about helpful books, videos, and contact information for other places (GRCA, AKC, etc.), where the caller can get additional information.

Alternatively, instead of mailing information, for those that have computers, providing a complete list of websites that have excellent information regarding the Golden Retriever is another option. It can save a member club money and puts the responsibility on the consumer to obtain the recommended articles and information that best suits their needs.

### **3. Requirements For Referral Service For Breeders**

Currently, the majority of member clubs' puppy referral volunteers model their breeder listing requirements after the GRCA's Code of Ethics. That means that for breeders to have their litters listed, or to be included on a member club's recommended list of breeders, a given breeder must agree to follow the GRCA Code of Ethics. Following the Code of Ethics includes having these clearances for sires and dams before breeding:

1. OFA (Orthopedic Foundation for Animals) certificate with grades of "fair" "good" or "excellent" for hips and "normal" for elbow clearances, Penn HIP™ is also acceptable for hip clearance. A number of breeders do both Penn Hip and OFA hip clearances.

2. Heart clearance done by a board certified cardiologist and submitted to OFA;

3. Current (within 12 months of breeding) eye clearance done by a veterinary ophthalmologist who is a diplomat of the ACVO (American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists) and submitted to CERF (Canine Eye Registration Foundation) marked "normal".

Also, it is recommended that puppy referral programs follow all GRCA breeding-related resolutions, such as Resolution 05-15 that states: "GRCA-appointed puppy referral volunteers (GRCA Regional and Internet Puppy Referral Personnel) will not list any litters of members who engage in intentional cross-breeding of pure-bred Golden Retrievers for personal profit. While this resolution includes the GRCA regional and Internet puppy referral volunteers, it is hoped that member clubs will also follow suit."

Clubs that require copies of clearances for referral generally also require a three or more generation pedigree. Many clubs require that either the breeder or the stud dog owner of the litter be a member of their club. Some refer to any breeder who is a member of any GRCA member club, thus allowing them to refer to breeders in nearby cities. Only a few clubs require that the breeder be a GRCA member.

A few clubs have additional limitations such as listing no more than 4 litters per year for any one breeder, or only one litter per bitch per 12 month time period (i.e., no referrals for back-to-back litters). Some clubs have few breeders and few litters bred in a year, so this is not a problem. Other clubs have several breeders who are very active and breed more litters than a majority of club members think is advisable. Your club's

need for such additional requirements will depend on your specific situation and may vary with time.

Some clubs require fees from the breeders for doing referral for their litters, and others do not. Fees range from \$10 a litter up to \$100 a litter. Clubs using Breeders Lists may have a yearly fee, typically \$50 per year per breeder regardless of number of litters, or a discounted, one-time fee for a breeder that has only one litter that year. Fees can be helpful in preventing breeders from abusing the privilege of receiving puppy referral services. Fees can help a club cover the phone, photocopying, advertising, and postage costs of running a puppy referral service.

Sooner or later most puppy referral volunteers face the situation of being asked to provide referral services to a breeder whose litter, for whatever reason, does not strictly meet the club requirements. Perhaps the breeder is not yet a member of your club, but the litter is in all other ways reputedly bred, and you have no other litters to refer to at the moment. It will be to your club's benefit to build into your puppy referral requirements a mechanism for allowing the occasional exception. Perhaps it will be permitted if the majority of the puppy referral committee approves; or if the committee approves, it will be brought before the club membership for a vote. There should be sufficient safeguards in place to protect the quality of breeder referral, but allowing some flexibility is also advisable.

#### **4. The Referral**

There are a few common methods of distributing breeder referrals to consumers: Breeders Lists, Litter-by-Litter Referrals and a combination of the two.

**BREEDERS LISTS** are just that: a list of breeders who meet the club's requirements to be on the list. Every caller is given the list, and must call the various breeders to determine if any have puppies, if the sire and dam have the appropriate clearances, etc. The full responsibility of picking a breeder is up to the consumer. The advantage of this system is that it can put callers in touch with reputable breeders, who may not have puppies, but may know of up-coming breedings and can get the caller on a waiting list.

Some clubs list any club member who declares he is a breeder and asks to be on the list. Other clubs have requirements. Often the breeder must sign a Code of Ethics statement, agreeing to use breed animals with appropriate clearances. Some clubs require that breeders fill out an application that must be approved by the puppy referral committee before putting their name on the list. Some clubs have lengthy requirements, such as the breeder must :

- be an active member in good standing of their club;
- attend a certain number of club meetings a year;
- volunteer at a certain number of club events a year;
- use only cleared breeding stock for all litters;
- use spay/neuter contracts on all pet puppies, etc.

One club requires the breeders to give a certain number of hours service to the Education or Rescue programs every year in order to stay on the Breeders List.

**LITTER-BY-LITTER** referrals involve the puppy referral person giving out a breeder's name only when they know the breeder has a litter of puppies available and the litter meets requirements defined by the club for referral services. Some clubs have few requirements and refer to any breeder in the club who calls and says they have a litter if the referral person "knows" that breeder uses cleared breeding stock. These clubs tell all callers to look for certain clearances before buying a puppy but tell them the club doesn't know for sure if the referred litter has those clearances and it is the buyer's responsibility to ask to see the clearance certificates. One problem with this system is that the club and puppy referral have no real idea if the litters they list have clearances or not. Other clubs require that the breeder send photocopies or scanned copies of required clearances, pedigree or whatever, for each litter, to the referral person. These clubs list only litters with documented clearances. The club usually requires the puppy referral person to refer for any breeder that provides copies of clearances and meets the club's other requirements for referral. Under this system, it is still wise to advise the caller to ask the breeder to show the clearances so that the buyer assumes responsibility for confirming that the clearances are valid for that litter.

**COMBINATION OF BREEDER LIST AND LITTER LIST:** Several clubs provide a combination list that contains breeders and litter-by-litter listings, as they are available. After a breeder's litter is sold, they may move to the breeder list if they wish.

## 5. Advertising

It does no good to have a fantastic puppy referral program setup if no one in the community knows how to find you! You'll need to advertise or make some sort of effort to get the phone number out and about.

Newspaper classified ads used to be where 99% of the public looked when buying a puppy. Today many buyers look on the Internet for breeder or breed club websites. If your puppy referral program wants to intercept consumers before they buy from puppy mills, backyard breeders, or pet stores, well placed ads in the newspaper and

informative websites are logical places to advertise. The draw back for small clubs may be the cost. Some clubs address this by running ads only 1-2 times a month every other Sunday.

There are many sources of free or very low cost advertising. Look around in your community and be creative!

1. Veterinary offices
2. Local veterinary professional association newsletters
3. Local pet stores
4. Supermarket bulletin boards or advertising kiosks
5. Local all-breed kennel club, breed club and breeder referral directories
6. Animal shelters
7. Local canine-related newsletters
8. Participation in pet fairs, dog shows, etc.
9. Presentations at local schools and libraries

Create a flyer with complete information regarding your puppy referral program. Be sure your flyer is simple, eye-catching, uncluttered, and easy to read. If possible list only ONE phone number that will lead callers to someone who can help connect them with any of your club's services. One flyer can be used to promote all aspects of club activities. Once your flyer is designed and reproduced, distribute copies at club meetings, asking members to take them to vet offices, supermarkets, pet stores, and other appropriate places for display. You can get A LOT of community exposure for your puppy referral phone number in this manner.

## GRCA RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

The GRCA recognizes the need for each club to have the freedom and flexibility to structure their puppy referral program in a manner best suited to their region and available resources. The following are to be taken as suggested guidelines, not mandatory requirements. These suggestions are made in the spirit of encouraging breeding practices that benefit the Golden Retriever breed, and puppy referral practices that have maximum public education potential.

- 1) Every GRCA member club should have a puppy referral program.
- 2) Each club should formulate a clear set of requirements breeders must meet to receive referral services. These requirements should be made known to all of the club members. Ideally these requirements will represent the agreed-upon consensus of the club membership, not the personal breeding ideology of one individual club member.
- 3) All breeders meeting the club's defined and stated criteria should be given referral services on an equal basis.
- 4) As a minimum, a club should require the following for both sire and dam of any litter that is to receive referral services:
  - OFA certificate for elbow and hips or a Penn Hip™ report for hips (They do not assess elbows at this time).
  - CERF certificate or ophthalmologists eye exam report available indicating "Normal" for both eyes. Both CERF certificates and eye exam reports must be dated within 12 months of breeding.
  - OFA Cardiac clearance certificate. In areas where breeders have ready access to a board-certified cardiologist or internist with cardiology specialty, clubs may want to consider requiring cardiac reports.
- 5) In addition to the above health requirements, age of a breeding animal is also a consideration. While the GRCA does not mandate a minimum age for breeding, it is suggested that in general it is difficult to assess breeding suitability of a Golden Retriever until they are about 2 years of age, since generally Golden Retrievers are not physically and mentally mature until that time. With the availability now of Penn Hip™ evaluations for dogs less than 2 years of age, clubs may wish to consider the issue of establishing a minimum age requirement for puppy referral.

- 6) Clubs are encouraged to use some means of verifying that breeders receiving referrals are complying with the club's requirements. Puppy referral volunteers should obtain (in some form) copies of health certifications before breeder referrals are given to consumers, and breeders may also be asked to sign a Code of Ethics statement agreeing that they will conform to the club's requirements for puppy referral.
- 7) Club puppy referral volunteers should inform would-be-puppy buyers of the club's minimum requirements for puppy referral service and should urge callers to only buy from a breeder who can show them copies of the above mentioned health certifications. It should be made clear that it is the buyer's responsibility to confirm that a breeder has these health certifications for their litter. Callers should also be made aware that there are other potentially hereditary health problems known to exist in the breed, including but not limited to: cancer, autoimmune disorders, hypothyroidism, epilepsy, and allergies. Clubs should mail or email out packets of educational material to each caller. Backing up verbal information given during a phone call with mailed printed material reinforces information learned. Even experienced puppy buyers can benefit from reading educational material.
- 8) Clubs are strongly recommended to include a written disclaimer statement in their education packets, informing callers that the club is providing referral services only, and it is not responsible for any outcome should the caller buy a puppy through a club referral. A copy of a generic disclaimer appears in Appendix 4.
- 9) Clubs are encouraged to use available resources to advertise their puppy referral program in the local community.
- 10) Clubs are encouraged to view puppy referral as a powerful public education tool.

## **SOME FINAL THOUGHTS**

In setting up your puppy referral program, realize that your club members may all agree that the program should be structured such that only reputable, ethical breeders will receive referral services from the club; The difficulty arises in that your club members may all have different ideas about what constitutes responsible, ethical breeding. Some compromise is going to be necessary. When the debate gets heated, it may help to ask every person involved to stop a moment and think about the “big picture” and what is best for the Golden Retriever breed in the long run.

Remember puppy referral can be much more than just helping breeders sell puppies. It can be about educating the public, preventing people from buying from non-reputable puppy sources, helping people make educated choices about getting a Golden, and making sure they have the information they need to successfully raise a puppy. A good puppy referral program can go a long way toward rescue prevention by helping prevent impulsive and unwise puppy purchases -- the kind of situations that land Golden Retrievers in need of rescue. One educated puppy purchase from a reputable breeder can turn a family from a life-time of irresponsible dog ownership to becoming educated, responsible dog owners. Puppy referral is a key component to improving the future of the Golden Retriever breed.

## **APPENDIX 1. GRCA RESOURCES TO ASSIST PUPPY REFERRAL**

### **GRCA Website**

The GRCA has a website. It offers a wide variety of information, including contact information for all GRCA member clubs and their puppy referrals and a link to club rescue groups. It also offers the Golden Retriever breed standard, the WC/WCX rules, a GRCA membership application, puppy buying information, links to other dog-related web pages, and much more. E-mail addresses for the GRCA Board members, GRCA Administrative Assistant, and other GRCA volunteers are also located here. See [www.GRCA.org](http://www.GRCA.org).

### **GRCA Puppy Referral Committee**

The GRCA Puppy Referral Committee was formed in 1997 to provide a link between the GRCA and its member club Puppy Referral volunteers and to provide assistance to Puppy Referral volunteers. Contact the Puppy Referral Committee Chairman to find out what the GRCA can do to assist your club's puppy referral program.

### **Local Golden Retriever Club Contacts**

The GRCA website has a separate listing of puppy referral volunteers organized by State or Region. Consult [www.GRCA.org](http://www.GRCA.org). The list should be updated by the GRCA Administrative Assistant several times per year and is mailed to the GRCA member club delegates or secretaries. Puppy referral volunteers may find this list helpful for referring callers to other clubs outside of their immediate area. Puppy Referral volunteers who are unable to obtain a copy of the list may obtain it by writing to the GRCA Administrative Assistant. A separate list of golden retriever rescue organizations is also available on the GRCA website.

### **GRCA Educational materials**

The GRCA Public Education Committee has compiled a list of educational materials, which may be useful in your contacts with puppy buyers. A certain number can be ordered free by your club. Others are purchased through the GRCA Store. See Appendix 3 for details.

**APPENDIX 2.  
CURRENT GRCA CONTACT INFORMATION & OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS**

**GRCA Puppy Referral Chairman**

Ellan Thorson  
9 Taney Avenue  
Annapolis, MD 21401-2711

[ellanwt@aol.com](mailto:ellanwt@aol.com)  
(410) 268-9249

**GRCA Public Education Chairman**

Linda Shipman  
9394 Rivercourt Way  
Juneau, AK 99801-9625

[Linda.Shipman@chezor.com](mailto:Linda.Shipman@chezor.com)  
(907) 789-1245

**GRCA Administrative Assistant**

Jolene Carey  
P.O. Box 20434  
Oklahoma City, OK 73156

[careyjolen@aol.com](mailto:careyjolen@aol.com)  
(405) 752-8400

**GRCA Website**

<http://www.grca.org>

**American Kennel Club**

*Main Office*  
260 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10016

<http://www.akc.org>

(212) 696-8200

*Customer Service & Registration*  
5580 Centerview Drive  
Raleigh, NC. 27606

(919) 233-9767

**Orthopedic Foundation for Animals**

2300 E. Nifong Blvd.  
Columbia, MO 65201-3806

<http://www.offa.org>  
(573) 442-0418  
(573) 875-5073 fax  
[ofa@offa.org](mailto:ofa@offa.org)

**Canine Eye Registration Foundation**

CERF  
Lynn Hall  
625 Harrison Street  
W. Lafayette, IN 47907-2026

<http://www.vmdb.org/cerf.html>  
(765) 494-8149  
(765) 494-9981 fax  
[cerf@vmdb.org](mailto:cerf@vmdb.org)

**PennHIP Information**

University of Pennsylvania  
Hip Improvement Program  
3541 Walnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104

<http://www.pennhip.org>

## APPENDIX 3: GRCA Education Materials

### To order the four following items

1. Contact an officer of your member club's Board of Directors to gain approval for an order.
2. The member club secretary requests these items from Jolene Carey, GRCA Administrative Assistant, [careyjolen@aol.com](mailto:careyjolen@aol.com). All orders for these items are mailed via third class mail, so please plan ahead

**\*Hi! I'm a Golden Retriever - (the poster)** - 17" x 11" page folded in half to be 8 1/2 x 11 slightly glossy poster. It points out the pros and cons of owning a Golden. It opens up to a lovely photo of an adult Golden with parts of the body marked - i.e. stifle, tail, hock, shoulder, forearm, etc. Printed below it is the AKC Standard for Golden Retrievers. On the back is information about GRCA and the Golden Retriever Foundation. GRCA member clubs and rescue groups may request as many as they wish free of charge.

**\*So you'd like to learn more about...Golden Retrievers! (the PAL letter- PAL stands for Public Awareness Letter)** This is an 8 1/2 x 11 page folded into a tri-fold brochure. It is a variation on the PAL letter that owners receive from AKC, along with a registration certificate, and contains the same information. It packs a lot of information into a small space. There is an order form to request further information or to buy the Intro booklet. GRCA member clubs and rescues may request as many of these as they wish free of charge.

**\*Acquiring a Golden Retriever (Acquiring)** This 40 page 9" x 4" booklet is excerpted from An Introduction to the Golden Retriever. It's packed full of useful information and includes a bibliography of suggested reading. GRCA member clubs may request 50 free each year, and rescue organizations may request 100 free each year. Large supplies available. If your club or rescue group would like to order more than the number of free copies, please use the GRCA on-line store. This booklet costs \$1.50 for a single copy or \$.80 each for 50 or more copies. <http://www.grca-store.com>

**The Golden Retriever Club of America, Inc. - An Introduction** - is a blue tri-fold that basically tells what GRCA is. It is useful for events where large numbers of people attend and they might want to know a little bit about the organization.

**The following three items may be ordered at the GRCA on-line store**  
<http://www.grca-store.com>

**\*An Introduction to The Golden Retriever - (Intro)** A 79 page book containing everything that is in the Acquiring booklet, and lots more. This is the book that is advertised for sale in magazine ads. It is also sold in response to requests from the PAL letter order form. Quantity discount.

**\*Acquiring a Golden Retriever (Acquiring)** This 40 page 9" x 4" booklet is excerpted from An Introduction to the Golden Retriever. It's packed full of useful information and includes a bibliography of suggested reading. This booklet costs \$1.50 for a single copy or \$.80 each for 50 or more copies.

**\*Color Me Golden (coloring book)** This is a 16 page coloring book geared specifically to children. The pictures were created by Katie Ropar. The front and back covers are lovely color photos. On the inside front cover there is the illustrated Golden (same dog as the poster) with a four-paragraph description of what the Golden should be like. The inside back cover contains the contact information for GRCA and the Golden Retriever Foundation exactly like it does on the poster. This is a GRCA sales item - it sells for \$2.50 each or \$2.10 each in quantities of 10 or more.

**The following free public education material is available to download and print at the GRCA's National Rescue Committee website, <http://www.grca-nrc.org>**

Why Adopt a Rescue Golden <http://www.grca-nrc.org/whyadoptarescue.htm>

Frequently Asked Questions <http://www.grca-nrc.org/GAP-FAQ.htm>

Top 10 Reasons NOT to Get a Golden <http://www.grca-nrc.org/GAP-TOP10.htm>

If Something Happens to You: Providing for your Golden

<http://www.grca-nrc.org/GAP-IfSomethingHappens.htm>

**A free tri-fold brochure, "They've Done Their Part....Now It's Time To Do Ours" is available through the Golden Retriever Foundation (GRF).** This organization funds Golden Retriever health and genetics research, rescue and public education.

Member club volunteers: Your club secretary should send a request, with number of brochures needed, to Anne Shannon at [exqueen@aol.com](mailto:exqueen@aol.com) or 190 S. Soda Creek Road, Evergreen, CO 80439-9628.

Regional volunteers: Send your request to Barbara Zelechowski, [skymeadowgold@earthlink.net](mailto:skymeadowgold@earthlink.net) or 7808 N 216th Street, Elkhorn, NE 68022-4025.

#### **APPENDIX 4. GENERIC DISCLAIMER FORM**

It is suggested that club puppy referral programs send a written disclaimer with their educational packets. The following generic form offers a possible format for such a disclaimer. Replace the blanks with your club's name. Each club is responsible for their own disclaimer statement and for determining if it meets legal standards in their particular state.

Acceptance and use of the information provided by the \_\_\_\_\_ (club name) constitutes an acknowledgment that the user hereby releases and indemnifies the \_\_\_\_\_ (club name), and its officers, directors, members, and agents from any and all liability and damages sustained by the user as a result of any information obtained from this organization.

**APPENDIX 5:  
QUESTIONS TO ASK GOLDEN RETRIEVER BREEDERS BEFORE YOU BUY**

You may obtain a printable PDF copy of this by contacting the GRCA Puppy Referral Chairperson (Appendix 2). See following page for sample brochure.