



# ANNUAL REPORT 2017



# A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

2017 was a big year for us, filled with many exciting changes. We changed our name to Retrieve a Golden of the Midwest to better reflect the area we serve and also updated our logo. We launched a terrific new website that I think you'll find much easier to navigate. Behind the scenes, we developed a new dog database that makes it much easier for us to track information about the dogs in our care and greatly streamline the work of our volunteers.

But our biggest successes involved welcoming 272 dogs into our care. Of them, 101 were rescued from commercial breeding situations. For the first time in their lives, these dogs are experiencing the comforts of a home and the love of a family. It's your support that makes their new lives possible.

As part of the changing nature of rescue we anticipate a significant number of breeder dogs again in 2018 who will need additional socialization, as well as more dogs with significant medical issues. We'll continue to put programs in place to give our fosters and adopters more tools to help these dogs adjust to their new lives, and raise the funds needed to make sure that all of our dogs get the great care they deserve.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, our volunteers, and the dogs whose lives you've changed, thank you for a wonderful year.

*With gratitude,*  
Mark Crellin



## LEADERSHIP

### **Board of Directors**

Laura Buck, Board Member  
Sarah Cheesman, Board Member  
Mark Crellin, Chair of the Board  
Kate Heezen, Secretary  
Martha Jones, Board Member  
Patty Larson, Board Member  
Jane Nygaard, Founder/Board Member  
Sheila Rawski, Board Member  
Nicole Stundzia, Board Member

### **Leadership Team**

Tracy Berg, Adoption Manager  
Kelly Burns, Finance Manager  
Tracey Costello Scholz, Volunteer Manager  
Suzie Downs, Foster Relations Manager  
Ben Harris, IT Manager  
Kathryn Henriksen, Intake Manager  
Amy Lake, Development Manager  
Patty Larson, Director of Operations  
Kathleen Nugent, Behavior Services -CoManager  
Carolyn Otto, Events Manager  
Jan Stone, Administrative Manager  
Dayle Stubbs, Veterinary Services Manager  
Shelia White, Behavior Services Co-Manager

# CHANGING WITH THE TIMES

When RAGOM was formed in 1985 our work was focused mainly on rescuing dogs in Minnesota. But over the last decade or more we have expanded our reach to serve North and South Dakota, Iowa, and western Wisconsin.

In 2017 we changed our name to Retrieve a Golden of the Midwest, and with it, designed a sharp new logo.



We launched a new website, a huge undertaking made possible by the hundreds of hours of work by a number of highly skilled individuals. The new website is crisp, clean, and easy to navigate. Visitors

are able to quickly learn which adoptable dogs are good with other dogs, cats, and children, and sort by age or name to more quickly find the information they are seeking.

This was a complicated project because it also involved a massive behind-the-scenes change – a new dog database to replace our very outdated previous version. The new database greatly streamlines the work of our volunteers and makes it easier for us to track important information about the dogs in our care. Technological issues had previously been a challenge for RAGOM; the changes we've made allow our organization to take advantage of the benefits technology has to offer and will set us up for success for many years to come.

**Louie**  
**(17-028)**





# 29 PUPPIES RESCUED



*The pups required extensive medical care to recover.*

In November, we received a call from a commercial breeder who was unable to care for a large number of puppies who had recently been born. 29 young Golden Retrievers were in need of rescue.

Our team of volunteers sprang into action, and within days, had launched plans to transport all the puppies from Missouri into the waiting arms of foster families. It quickly became clear that nearly all of the puppies were extremely sick, suffering from kennel cough, giardia, pneumonia, coccidia, ear infections,

and more. If their rescue had been even days later, many might not have survived.

There were countless trips to the vet as the puppies received fluids, medications, and more, and the veterinary bills quickly skyrocketed to approximately \$5,000.

Hope was one of the puppies rescued. She was extremely dehydrated, underweight and infested with giardia and coccidia. She required three trips to the veterinarian for sub-q fluids and her foster family needed to give her medicine three times a day.

When called upon to help with large-scale rescues, we know it will not be easy. There are logistical challenges, including finding enough available foster families in a short period of time. Medical bills are expected, but in some cases they quickly rise above what has been budgeted. But we know our decision to help is often a matter of life or death for the dogs in need.

***“If their rescue had been even days later, many might not have survived.”***

RAGOM Veterinary Services Manager Dayle Stubbs oversaw the care of the puppies. “We have seen many commercially-bred puppies come into RAGOM in rough shape, but this was the sickest group I have seen in my ten years of volunteering. We almost lost two of the puppies due to severe upper respiratory infections. The foster families took amazing care of the puppies, and we did not lose a single one. I am proud to volunteer for an organization that went to such lengths to get them all healthy again.”

For these 29 puppies, their lives were forever changed the moment we said yes to their rescue. It's a decision we don't regret.



Hope  
(17-253)

## WHY WE RESCUE BREEDER DOGS

It's difficult to say no to the opportunity to rescue commercial breeding dogs, knowing that without intervention, they will be sold to other commercial breeders where they will live their lives in cages while being bred repeatedly.

At the same time, we do not want our actions to financially support the commercial breeding industry. Over the last year, we have made the decision to attend a number of dog auctions, but with protocols in place to prevent ourselves from rewarding commercial breeders.

We discretely participate, relying on the expertise and professionalism of our volunteers who understand the environment and do all they can to blend into the crowd. Our volunteers know what the typical selling prices are for dogs being auctioned and will rarely exceed these dollar amounts when bidding.

This strategy is necessary to prevent other commercial breeders from driving up the prices. If they know rescue groups are participating, some breeders will intentionally bid to help their fellow breeders make more money and prevent the dogs from going to rescue.

Unfortunately, sometimes difficult decisions have to be made, and dogs in need may get left behind. We know that if we begin to pay excessive prices that breeders will begin to produce more dogs to sell at the auctions, and we are not willing to perpetuate the problem.

We have also begun to build relationships with smaller commercial breeders, who will sometimes allow us to rescue their retired breeders instead of “disposing” of the dog on their own.



**272** dogs entered  
our care

more than  
**400** volunteers make  
our work possible

**262** dogs found new  
loving families

Barney  
(Abe 17-224A)

**1** Starfish Award  
recognized  
Jane Nygaard  
for her service

**2** hospice dogs  
received gentle care,  
ensuring their last  
days were golden

**2** dogs who are blind  
entered our care

**3** dogs treated  
for epilepsy

**6** masses removed

**6** dogs received  
eye surgery

**9** dogs required  
orthopedic surgery

**11** dogs had significant  
behavior issues,  
including fear-based  
reactivity & aggression  
toward other dogs

**24** dogs treated for  
tick-borne diseases

**38** senior dogs  
entered our care

**58** dogs neutered

**73** dogs spayed

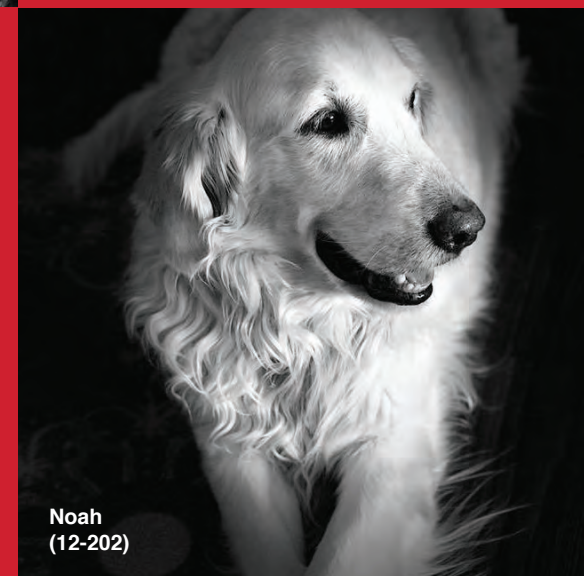


Rossi  
(Patrick 17-088TD)

**Volunteers** drove  
**64,239**  
miles to transport  
**343**  
dogs

**33**

dogs rescued from  
the country of **Turkey**



Noah  
(12-202)

**95**

**Veterinary Partners** in  
5-state area that provided  
discounted service



Susan  
(17-048A)

**"THE PASSION OF OUR VOLUNTEERS AND  
HOW WE WORK TOGETHER, SOMETIMES AT A  
MOMENT'S NOTICE, IS SO AMAZING. I LOVE  
KNOWING I'VE HELPED MAKE A CONNECTION  
BETWEEN A PERSON AND A DOG IN NEED."**

— Maria H., Dog Updates, Foster Roster & Transport Volunteer



Max  
(17-034)

# RETRIEVE A GOLDEN OF THE MIDWEST FINANCIAL REPORT 2017

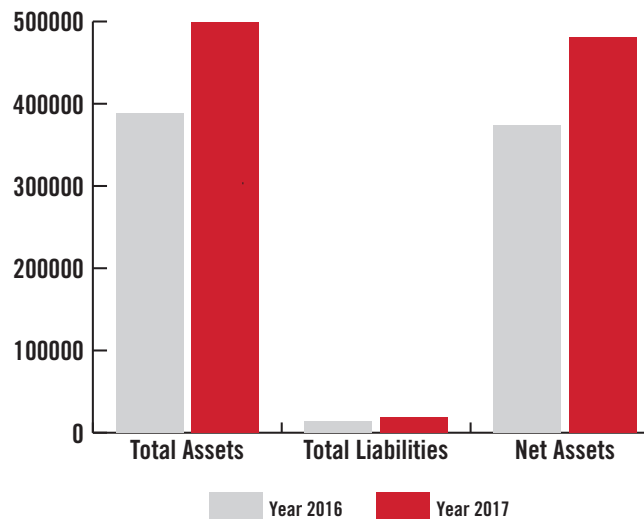
## 2017 BALANCE SHEET

### 2017 ASSETS & LIABILITIES

2017 Total Assets -- \$498,903  
2017 Total Liabilities -- \$18,528  
2017 Net Assets -- \$480,375

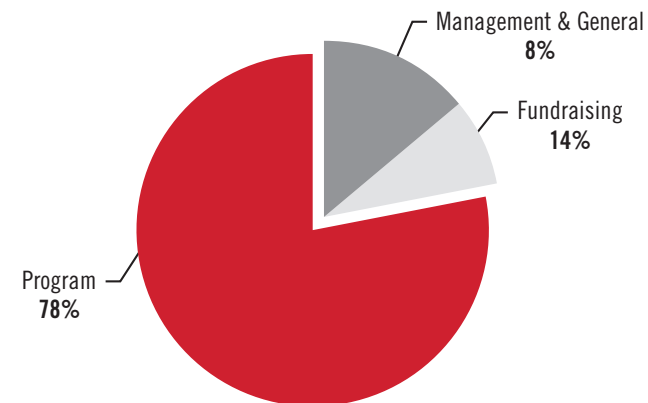
### 2016 ASSETS & LIABILITIES

2016 Total Assets -- \$388,236  
2016 Total Liabilities -- \$14,269  
2016 Net Assets -- \$373,967

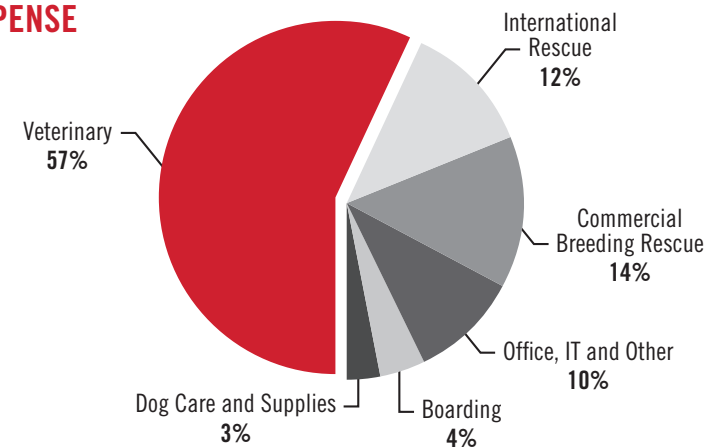


## 2017 INCOME STATEMENT

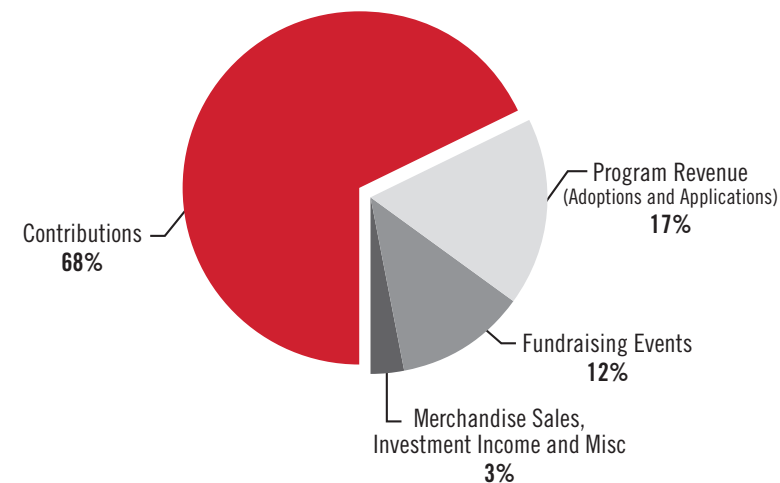
**TOTAL EXPENSE**  
\$535,443



**PROGRAM EXPENSE**  
\$419,636



**REVENUE**  
\$641,851





# A GOLDEN ANGEL

A few years ago, RAGOM began rescuing Golden Retrievers from the country of Turkey, where thousands of dogs are living on the streets, in the forests, and in municipal shelters, greatly in need of help. By the fall of 2017, we'd rescued 69 Turkish Golden Retrievers. We'd hoped to rescue more but did not have the budget to do so. There were so many dogs waiting for rescue, and our Turkish friends repeatedly asked for help. We hesitated, and wondered what to do.

## And then, a letter arrived, announcing a miracle.

In 2015, our longtime supporter Hazel Marsh passed away. We'd lost a friend, but it turned

out we'd gained an angel. Hazel had named RAGOM in her will.

We were able to use her bequest to rescue Turkish dogs who desperately needed help. On September 22, 15 grateful Golden Retrievers were flown to America, their new lives about to begin thanks to Hazel's generosity.

The Golden Legacy Circle is a special group of supporters who have included RAGOM in their estate plans – through their will, insurance policy, retirement plan, or other planned gift. Their support ensures that dogs in need will be welcomed and taken care of, well into the future.

Chunk  
(17-101)



## GOLDEN LEGACY CIRCLE MEMBERS

*Anonymous (2)*

*Lou Ambrose*

*Lisa Anne Bishop*

*Kelly Burns*

*Paddy Dunder*

*Susan Giloy*

*Richard Grigos  
and Lauren Segal*

*Michele and son  
Andrew Hamilton*

*Ruth A. Hinnenkamp*

*Mary Horton*

*Kristi Husted*

*Regina and  
Brandon Keith*

*Linda and  
Chuck Lee*

*Tom and  
Diane Lentz*

*Dan and Pamela  
McGowan*

*Forrest Meyeraan*

*Jane Nygaard*

*Krista and Gregg  
Okerman*

*Fred Page  
and Elayne  
Sexsmith*

*Pam and  
Denny  
Schulstad*

*Todd and Sharon  
Sens*

*Martha Jones  
Sichko*

*Kathleen Sprank*

*Nicole Stundzia*

*Mark and Ruth  
Valgemae*

*Jake and Cathy\*  
Wagenaar*

*Joe and Janice  
Zumbrunnen*

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

## FOSTER

Fostering is one of the most important and rewarding things a dog lover can do. Foster volunteers provide care and companionship until a permanent family is found. RAGOM covers all veterinary costs. Fosters choose the dog they'd like to foster, and help select the family who adopts their dog.

## VOLUNTEER

RAGOM would not survive without the generosity and boundless energy of our volunteers. Opportunities include transporting dogs, marketing, follow-up calls to adopters, participating in rescue missions, and more. Many volunteer projects and activities can be done remotely from your home. You'll meet kind-hearted people and have the opportunity to attend dog-friendly events.

## DONATE

RAGOM relies heavily on donations to support our rescue efforts. Giving opportunities include:

- Make a contribution, or sponsor a dog in our care
- Sign up for automatic monthly donations
- Create a lasting legacy – include RAGOM in your estate plans
- Become a corporate sponsor

For more information about donating to RAGOM, visit [ragom.org/ways-to-give](http://ragom.org/ways-to-give)

## FUNDRAISE

Join us for Goldzilla, our biggest fundraiser of the year. This year's event will be **September 9, 2018**. Our online program makes it easy to raise pledges that support the dogs in our care – and earn great prizes, too!

## FOLLOW US

Visit our website to sign up for our email communications, and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Be sure to encourage your friends to join us!

## ADOPT

This year, nearly 300 dogs will come to RAGOM in need of a second chance. Visit [www.ragom.org](http://www.ragom.org) for more information on how you can help.

Simon  
(17-145)





# OUR MISSION

Retrieve a Golden of the Midwest rescues, fosters, and finds forever homes for Golden Retrievers and Golden mixes in need.

*Cover: John 17-045A was rescued along with 18 other dogs from a commercial breeding auction.*

*Above: His first moments outside of a cage: Yogi 17-042A begins his new life.*

*Design by Kristin Koppin*



*Follow us on social media and at [ragom.org](http://ragom.org)*

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