



Adopt a Golden Nashville
Happy Retales Volunteer Story
November 2019

20 Years of GOLDEN Service: The Story of 3 Middle-Tennessee Women

As you pull into the parking lot you may not notice it at first, but Happy Retales—Brentwood, Tennessee’s elite pet destination—is nestled among the businesses at Creekside Crossing. Walking through the front door, you are met with everything you could imagine for your furbabies. Collars, leashes, treats, custom breed blankets and an endless selection of food options—it’s a pet heaven! Within moments, you are greeted with a sincere, southern welcome from one of the smiling faces of Gail Zika, Bonni Lamey, and Barbara Ramsey!

Gail, Bonni, and Barbara are volunteers with Adopt a Golden Nashville. For a collective 20 years, they have given their time, talent, and passion to Happy Retales on behalf of Adopt a Golden Nashville. Happy Retales is unlike other local pet stores—they generously pledge to donate 100% of their store’s profits to animal rescues. They partner with organizations like AGN. In return, each rescue provides volunteers to work at the store. It’s a major win-win for everyone!

At Adopt a Golden Nashville, we have been honored to have these three women dedicate countless hours to help support our mission and dedication to rescue, care, evaluation, and placement of abandoned or unwanted golden retrievers in middle Tennessee, southern Kentucky and northern Alabama. **Nearly \$33,000 has been donated to our rescue due in part to their volunteered hours at Happy Retales.**

To reflect on their time Gail, Bonni, and Barbara were asked a few questions to help others get a deeper understanding of their work at Happy Retales and the impact it has on Adopt a Golden Nashville.

Q1: How many years have you volunteered with Adopt a Golden Nashville? Why did you choose Happy Retales as your volunteer role?

Gail: Over 10 years—I was a board member when the then manager approached the rescue about a way to work together. They asked for volunteers to help them in exchange for money and in-kind donations for our fosters.

Bonni: 6 years—I worked in retail for several years and heard at an AGN Christmas party that they needed helpers at Happy Retales. I spoke to Gail and she set me up to start volunteering.

Barbara: Almost 6 years —I chose to work at Happy Retales because I wanted to do volunteer work on behalf of rescue dogs while at the same time avoiding the possibility of becoming attached to every dog I had contact with that need a home.

Q2: How does volunteering for Happy Retales allow you to increase public awareness of AGN and its mission?

Gail: We get to share information about Adopt a Golden Nashville with customers and share expertise about raising rescue dogs.

Bonni: I spread awareness by wearing my Adopt a Golden Nashville shirt to the store and often answer questions about our rescues because of it.

Barbara: Volunteering at Happy Retales provides many opportunities to converse with the store clientele about the benefits of adopting a rescue dog, as well as the needs of the rescue community. I am able to bring attention to AGN procedures and policies that assures both the best care and safety of our dogs and the perfect match with prospective owners.

Q3: To you, how does AGN’s mission impact the areas they rescue from?

Gail: It provides a service that is not available in other counties, gives families an option that their surrendered pet will find a good home, and keeps dogs out of high kill-rate shelters.

Bonni: There are so many dogs living in less than great conditions and AGN has been able to not only make a life changing difference for the dogs, but also a big difference in the lives of the families that adopt these wonderful pets. It is truly a blessing to see a frightened, unsure dog become a happy, confident family member in a relatively short amount of time.

Barbara: Every dog who AGN finds and who subsequently finds a forever home is impact to me.

When asked what fellow Adopt a Golden Nashville volunteers can do they said, *“Offer your time to be a Happy Retales helper. It is an incredible opportunity to give back, spread the word of our Golden rescue, and make some really amazing friends along the way!”*

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, Adopt a Golden Nashville is shining light on Gail, Bonni, and Barbara for their remarkable service and selflessness to devote time and energy to the greater well-being of golden retrievers in our rescue and animal rescue as a whole. Please join us in recognizing and thanking them for their combined 20 years of volunteerism!

If you would like to learn more about the Adopt a Golden Nashville, or if you’re interested in becoming a pet supply store volunteer at Happy Retales, please email info@AdoptAGoldenNashville.org.