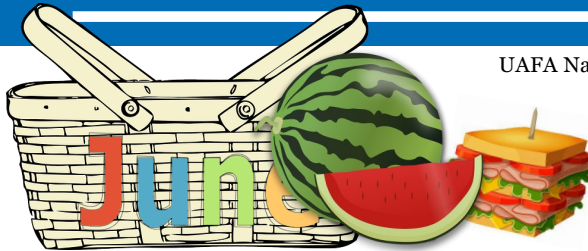


June 15, 2022

# UPCHURCH & ALLIED FAMILIES ASSOC.



UAFA National Home Office | 1130 Kildaire Farm Road, Suite 120 | Cary, NC 27511-4594



## FROM THE EDITOR

*Hello everyone! I'm happy to bring to you our June Newsletter!*

A couple things to report. UAFA's Director and Duke University Alumni, Herbert Jackson "Jack" Upchurch, brought to my attention this sweet story of a beloved dog named Nugget and his faithful owner/companion Keith Upchurch. I loved the story and wanted to share with you. Thank you Jack!

There is a second part to this story you will enjoy, that will arrive in next month's UAFA newsletter—which is our big FOOTPRINTS edition! Please send in those reports, stories and articles, pictures and what-have-you! Thanks! 😊

Our esteemed President, Dr. Tom Upchurch has recently returned from Italy where he spent some fine time with his daughter and son-in-law. I heard they had a great time and took many pictures!

UAFA is your resource for linking, preserving, and supporting family history for future generations to come. Become a member of Upchurch & Allied Families Association today!

*Cindy Hale*

## Happy Father's Day

### Farewell, Nugget: After a decade of daily smiles, Duke's beloved golden retriever

*The Charlotte Observer - May 12, 2022 - By Kate Murphy*

Almost every afternoon for the past five years, Duke University students could count on the smiling face and wagging tail of a golden retriever, Nugget, to brighten their day.

She, with her owner and Duke alum Keith Upchurch, would stroll through campus to her favorite bench outside the student union and dining facility on West Campus. There, she would eagerly wait to be petted by students, "shake" with both paws, fetch and then eat apples, her favorite snack.

"Little things like that are therapeutic for college students who just have unrelenting pressure," Upchurch said.

Nugget occasionally got distracted by squirrels and was let off leash to chase them. But she could never quite catch

them before they escaped up a tree. And she always came trotting back to her bench, ready for more visitors.

It was never a long wait.

Sometimes Nugget and Upchurch would just have to walk away from the never-ending line of students waiting to see her.

'A win-win-win situation'

The duo remained a constant on campus among the swell of changes and isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing a sort of therapy for students.

"It made her happy, it made the students happy and it made me happy," Upchurch said.

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**American Independence  
Day Parade in the  
Mining Town of Central  
City, Colorado - 1890s.**







## Farewell, Nugget: After a decade of daily smiles, Duke's beloved golden retriever dies

*Continued from Page 1*

"So that was a win-win-win situation."

Nugget, Duke's beloved unofficial mascot, died Thursday morning after being diagnosed with lymphoma in March. She was 11 years old.

She collapsed while on her morning walk and Upchurch had to take her to the vet to be euthanized. But she had a high-quality life right up until the very end, Upchurch said.

He and Nugget spent about an hour on campus Wednesday evening taking photos and playing with students, faculty and staff who were drawn to her friendly personality.

"I'm glad that she was able to have fun right up to the very end, and to make people smile," Upchurch said. "That's a pretty good legacy."

Upchurch started bringing Nugget to the Sarah P. Duke Gardens when she was only a few months old. She was like a strong magnet then, he said.

Everyone would marvel at how beautiful she was and ask what Upchurch did to make her coat silky and shiny. It wasn't a secret ingredient in her food or a rigorous daily brushing routine, just good genes.

"She was just born that way," Upchurch said.

After meeting Nugget at the gardens, a few students easily persuaded Upchurch to bring her to campus, and she's been a staple since 2012. It started mostly with weekend trips. Once Upchurch retired as a longtime reporter at The Herald-Sun in 2016, he brought her to campus everyday unless it was raining.

"I'd have students with tears in their eyes sometimes coming up to me and saying, 'This is the highlight of my day,'" Upchurch said.



**Duke University and Duke Alumni Keith Upchurch with his popular golden retriever, Nugget.**

"After I heard that about 100 times I realized, you know, this is a service that I need to continue," he said. "It wasn't a burden, it was enjoyable."

Nugget made thousands of friends over the years and her popularity only grew.

She was featured on her own student-run Instagram account that has about 4,000 followers, became an icon on T-shirts made and sold by a student and inspired an online petition for a statue in her honor as the "best symbol of Duke's unity and togetherness."

On Thursday, Nugget's Instagram account shared posts from her fans saddened by the news.

"Grateful for the smiles and warmth you brought," one student wrote.

"So sad to read this! We visited the campus last weekend and met Nugget for a few minutes. What a beau-



tiful heart!!" another person commented.

Nugget made an appearance at Duke's graduation Sunday to congratulate students, take photos and reunite with alumni.

She spent her final days doing what she did best, making new friends and bringing a smile to everyone she met on Duke's campus.

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