

# Puppy Prints



North Carolina Puppy Raising Program Newsletter

Summer 2007

## Congratulations to NCPRP's Most Recent Graduates: Dominique, Dustin, Jeeter, Pancho, and Ralph.

### About the Graduates:

#### Karen Berger and Dominique

By Kristen Shamblin, Puppy Raiser

When Dominique came to NC, she delighted us with her playful, energetic personality and her sparkling eyes. She was a joy to her family, friends, puppy sitters, and co-workers. In public, she was confident and happy. At home, she was loving and well mannered. We could not have asked for a nicer puppy.

While she was in training in NY, I received regular training reports to keep me informed of her progress. Her final report said, Dominique "worked seamlessly through the crowds of people in Brooklyn." You can imagine how happy that report made me! If she could stay focused in a busy city, she could work anywhere.

In May, Dominique was placed in the home training program with her partner, Karen Berger. Karen lives in Brooklyn, NY. I couldn't believe my sweet little girl raised in the tiny town of Knightdale was going to become a city girl. I was so proud of her, and also a little nervous. I hoped she would have a place to play when she wasn't working. Then I talked with Karen, and I knew I couldn't have picked a better person or place if I had done the choosing myself.

Dominique is Karen's 5<sup>th</sup> guide dog. She lives with Karen; her husband, Arthur; and their two cats, with whom Dominique has become good friends. Karen sent me some pictures, and much to my delight, I saw that there is grass in front of their building. Karen also takes Dominique to visit friends who have yards where she can play ball.

Karen is a Psychotherapist with her own practice. She works three long days per week, and has four days off. Karen said, "Poor Domi has to listen to people's problems all day." I doubt that Dominique minds, as Karen has bought her a new bed for her office, and has taken a toy for her to play with in between patients.

Karen and Arthur love to travel and are taking Dominique to Yosemite National Park, the Napa Valley, and San Francisco in August. Wow, two months on the job, and she'll be going on vacation...a working vacation, but vacation nevertheless.

Karen said Dominique is an amazing guide. She said Dominique walks with her tail up, so Karen knows she is comfortable in her surroundings. She uses her head to nudge people out of the way so Karen can easily make her way down the crowded sidewalks. Karen also said Dominique is her first guide dog who has not required a training collar. Dominique was one of the first NC puppies raised with rewards based training.



Karen and Arthur Berger with  
Dominique

*Dominique's vet sponsor was Neuse River Veterinary Hospital of Wendell and her food sponsor was Diversified Systems, Inc. of Raleigh, NC.*

### **Sam McClain and Dustin**

The following is from the graduation profile of the April 2007 graduating class.



**Sam McClain and Dustin**

Stockbridge, Georgia is the home of Sam McClain, who has come to Guiding Eyes for the Blind to meet Dustin, his second dog from the school. Sam lost his sight in 1996 as the result of an automobile accident, at which time he was employed in the construction trade. As a person who treasured his independence (and also loved dogs), Sam followed the advice given him at the Georgia Century Center and contacted Guiding Eyes. The school's immediate positive response initiated Sam's re-entry into what he had considered to be a "lost world." Sam entered the Business Enterprise Program and now is employed as a sandwich/snack vendor where he enjoys a life of sociability and renewed purpose. He is an avid fisherman (catch and release) and especially finds his sense of adventure sated by operating a four-wheeler dirt bike. In his more quiet moments, he enjoys listening to music, especially jazz. Sam feels that he and Dustin have bonded already. "Dustin," says Sam, "was created and chosen just for me. He is sweet, intelligent, and communicates his affection for me with his soft tongue on my cheek. I sleep with my head at the bottom of the bed close to his tie-down so we can feel connected. I know that he will not only ensure my total independence but give me love and companionship." Sam describes Guiding Eyes for the Blind as a wonderful organization where everyone - administration and staff - make you feel you are a member of one happy family.

*Dustin was raised, initially, by Allison Spain of Greenville, NC; then by Sharon and Andy Cooke of Cary, NC. While in Greenville, his vet sponsor was Animal Hospital of Greenville and his food sponsors were Allen and Donna Spain. While in Cary, Dustin's vet sponsor was Western Wake Veterinary Services, and the Cooke's were his food sponsors.*

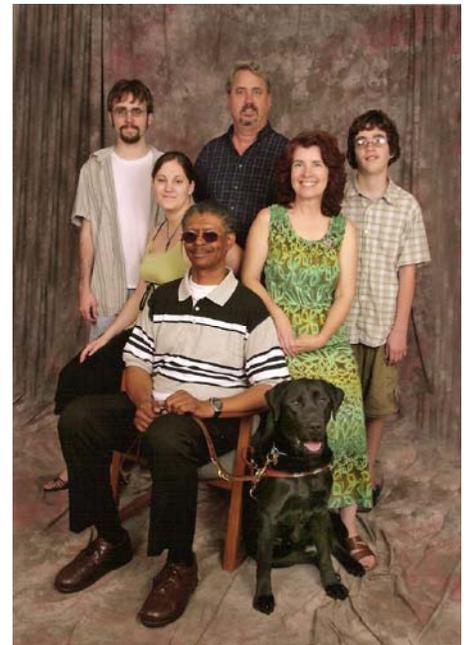
### **Curtis Graham, Jr. and Jeeter**

The following is from the graduation profile of the May 2007 graduating class.

Baltimore, Maryland is the home of Curtis Graham, Jr., who at the age of 57, has come to Guiding Eyes for the Blind for Jeeter, his first guide dog. Glaucoma developed after Curtis had served as a Marine in Vietnam, followed by a satisfying career as a Trailways bus driver. Curtis came to Guiding Eyes upon the recommendation of his counselor at rehab. Curtis also had volunteered at the National Aquarium in Baltimore and will now be a pioneer there, along with Jeeter in the position of Information Specialist. Curtis is dad to five grown children, and has been happily married to his second wife for eight years. He is a member of the American Legion and League of the Marines. He loves to travel, swim and likes to cook. "Jeeter," he says, "is a lot like me and I know that he will be a tremendous factor in helping me to attain my independence. Instead of having to depend on others, when I'm ready to go, we'll go! Guiding Eyes for the Blind is a great school. Here, they are down to earth, helpful and consistent. As a first-timer, at my age, I would shout to the world: It doesn't get any better than this!"

Julie Haynes, Puppy Raiser, shared the following about Jeeter. Jeeter was a sweet and fun puppy who stole our hearts from the start. We are very proud of him! Raising a Guiding Eyes pup is truly a family commitment and we all enjoyed making this trip together to celebrate his graduation. It is so rewarding to know that Jeeter will make a difference in Curtis' life and we wish them much success.

*Jeeter's vet sponsor was Animal Care of Matthews, NC and his food sponsors were the Haynes' family.*



**Curtis Graham, Jr. and Jeeter  
with the Haynes family**

## **Marianne Schmidt and Pancho**

By Irene Cucurullo, Puppy Raiser

Pancho began his home training in Layton, Utah in April. He has been matched with Marianne Schmidt. He is her first guide dog and she is excited because he has opened a whole new world for her.

*Pancho's vet sponsor was Bayleaf Veterinary Hospital of Raleigh, NC and his food sponsors were the Cucurullo family.*

## **Kimberly Cotterman and Ralph**

By Danny Overcash, Puppy Raiser



**Kimberly Cotterman and Danny Overcash with Ralph**

On May 26, 2007, I was pleased to be in the audience watching my sweet Ralph graduate for the second time in six months. His first match was not made in heaven (it happens sometimes, with my first dog, actually) and I was anxiously awaiting his second foray into the working world with mild trepidation. Please be the right person!

My spirits rose at the sight of the new building, finally completed, and the room in which graduation was to be held. What a treat not to be crammed into a room much too small for the occasion. Listening to speakers praise Puppy Raisers, I thought once again how much pleasure and satisfaction I have received in my 14 years of association with Guiding Eyes for the Blind.

After the ceremony, I sat next to Kim (ignoring Ralph as we've been taught) and introduced myself. Suddenly this huge black dog, harness and all, was in my lap licking at me as though I were Frosty Paws on a hot day! Kim laughed with delight. I approved of her in that instant.

Kimberly Cotterman is a delightful young woman with a zest for life and an obvious love for Ralph. She graduated from Wake Forest and she travels to Raleigh as her room-mate's boyfriend lives there. When she found out Ralph was raised in North Carolina, she felt it was the best possible omen. She lives in Arlington, VA, and when she heard of my Northern Virginia connections, she gave me her phone number and insisted I call and visit anytime I'm in the area. She has already e-mailed to tell me that Ralph is settling in well. I am so hoping that this match has heavenly blessings and will endure for many years. It's a heck of a long drive to NY but, would I do it again? You better believe it!

*Ralph's vet sponsor was Lakewood Veterinary Hospital of Mooresville, NC and Danny and Walt Overcash were his food sponsors.*



## **Meet NCPRP's Newest Puppies!**

**Oslo**, a male yellow lab, is being raised by Irene and Maria Cucurullo of Raleigh, NC. Oslo is their 3<sup>rd</sup> GEB puppy! Oslo's vet sponsor is Bayleaf Veterinary Hospital of Raleigh, NC and his food sponsors are the Cucurullo family. Irene provided the following comments about Oslo: [Oslo loves to chase his fox tail. He will get so excited when he chases it, he will pounce or summersault over to it. He also likes to attack the water coming from the hose.](#)

**Ruffles**, a female black lab, is being raised by Barbara Cuddy of Calabash, NC. Barbara has previously fostered a GEB brood and Ruffles is her 4th GEB puppy! Ruffles' vet sponsor is Seaside Animal Care of Calabash, NC and her food sponsors are Barbara's son-in-law and daughter, Mack and Eileen Price of Kennesaw, GA.



**Maria Cucurullo with Oslo**

**Visa**, a female yellow lab, is being raised by Jim and Luan Harmeson. Visa is their 2<sup>nd</sup> GEB puppy! Visa's vet sponsor is Jordan Lake Animal Hospital of Pittsboro, NC. Her food sponsors are the Harmesons.

## Where are they now?

**Lucas**, a male golden retriever raised by Patricia and Sally Neve of Durham, NC, was released from Guiding Eyes, and recently began training at the Susquehanna Assistance Dogs School in Pennsylvania. Lucas' vet sponsor was North Paw Animal Hospital of Durham and his food sponsors were Rick and Sue Copland of Hillsborough, NC.

**Rambler**, a male German shepherd raised by Sharon and Andy Cooke of Cary, NC, recently passed his in-for-training test, and the testing to be part of the breeding colony. He is now a GEB stud dog, and is living with a foster family near the training school. Rambler's vet sponsor was Western Wake Veterinary Services and the Cooke's were his food sponsors.

**Wilbur**, a male yellow lab raised by Irene and Maria Cucurullo of Raleigh, NC, recently passed his in-for-training test. Wilbur's vet sponsor was Bayleaf Veterinary Hospital of Raleigh, NC and his food sponsors were the Cucurullo family.

**Will**, a male black lab raised by the Griffith family of La Grange, NC was released from Guiding Eyes, and recently began training at ATF in Front Royal, VA. Will's vet sponsor was Riverbank Animal Hospital of Kinston and his food sponsors were the Griffith family.

### In Loving Memory Navaho 7/3/94 – 7/9/07

Navaho, a Guiding Eyes released dog, recently passed away. Navaho was raised by Fran and Bob Gelb, now of Williamsburg, VA. Navaho was their 2<sup>nd</sup> GEB puppy. His vet sponsor was Swift Creek Animal Hospital and the Gelbs were his food sponsors.

## Jes Smith and Guiding Eyes Dog, Harley, Attend NC Puppy Class

The following excerpt was taken from the Guiding Eyes, NY website.

The story begins with Guiding Eyes graduate Jes Smith from North Carolina. Blind since infancy, Jes was 16 years old when he received his Guiding Eyes dog, Harley, in 2002. In the spring of 2004, Jes experienced his first seizure. He didn't have another one until he went to college in the fall of that year. He ended his first year at college in the hospital because of the severity of the sudden seizures, for which doctors still have no explanations.

The young man went through a series of medication treatments, all with different side effects that made it dangerous even life-threatening -- for him to be out on his own. His doctors advised him not to go back to college or anywhere else, without someone to help him in case a seizure struck. "I was house-bound," he says. "I was afraid to leave my home."

Jes and his mother, Pam Smith, turned to Guiding Eyes for the Blind in Yorktown Heights, New York, knowing that we do everything possible to respond to the needs of our students and graduates. Our special needs program assists blind individuals with disabilities in addition to blindness, such as balance issues or deafness. But training a guide dog to respond to seizures was uncharted territory!

Aware that this was a life and death situation, Guiding Eyes rose to the challenge. We contacted Mike Goehring, the Director of Training at Great Plains Assistance Dogs in North Dakota. After evaluating Harley's abilities (he was considered "middle-aged" at five years old), he decided to offer the seizure-response training at no cost to the Smith family.

In the fall of 2005, Guiding Eyes Assistant Director of Training, Graham Buck, traveled to North Dakota with Harley to undergo a week of intensive training. Among other things, Harley learned how to recognize a seizure and pull a cord or pin from a two-way radio on command. This radio would connect Jes to his mother or a college instructor, depending on his location. Harley also learned how to pull the cord or push a button on a medical-alert device if Jes has a seizure and can't call for help on his own. The instruction continued for an additional three months at Guiding Eyes for the Blind. The training was successful, and Harley returned home to North Carolina as an enhanced model guide dog. Graham, along with Mike Goehring, worked with Jes in his home to hone his skills through the use of new guide dog commands and new "seizure" commands giving the blind graduate (and his mother) plenty of support and encouragement along the way.

Pam Smith was amazed during the first test run when she witnessed how the Guiding Eyes dog could help in an emergency. "When I first saw Harley pull the cord out of the two-way radio and it connected directly to me, it was just an overwhelming sensation to know that my son will be able to become independent again and overcome this obstacle just as he has with his blindness."

The world is opening back up for Jes. No longer withdrawn and fearful, he is taking a few classes at a technical community college, and plans to return to college full time. His gratitude towards Guiding Eyes knows no bounds. "Guiding Eyes deserves so much praise. I was terrified of death from a seizure. I thought my medical problems were going to wreck my life. Guiding Eyes heard about my need and took care of it. Their boldness and willingness to take a chance with this new venture were incredible. Their instructors are very supportive, and they provide immediate follow-up assistance in person and over the phone. Thank you, Guiding Eyes, for my wonderful, amazing guide dog!"



**Jes Smith (center) and Harley visit puppy class**

Jes spent six weeks this summer doing an internship at GlaxoSmithKline in RTP. While working in the area, Jes and Harley attended puppy class in Cary, NC on June 20. Jes told the group what it means to him to have Harley, and also how much he appreciates all of us who volunteer for Guiding Eyes. As volunteers, we are grateful to Jes for taking the time to share his experiences with us.

## ATTENTION ALL PUPPY RAISERS:

Please bring your DVD and an accurate reading of your puppy's weight to the next evaluation (if you did not have it for the Quarterly Raiser Report) and don't forget to submit the Quarterly Raiser Report ([www.guidingeyesbcweb.org](http://www.guidingeyesbcweb.org))!

### EVALUATION SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, August 17<sup>th</sup> and SATURDAY, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
Raleigh Church of Christ, Raleigh, NC

<b>Friday 8/17</b>	<b>PUPPY</b>	<b>RAISER</b>
<b>2:30 PM</b>	Iota	Wiles
<b>3:15 PM</b>	Nino	Geiner
<b>4:00 PM</b>	Powell	Neve
<b>4:45 PM</b>	Elway	Piron
<b>5:30 PM</b>	Parker	Haynes
<b>6:15 PM</b>	Paige	Vignovic
<b>7:00 PM</b>	Withers	Meek
<b>7:45 PM</b>	JW	Pendergraft
<b>Saturday 8/18</b>	<b>PUPPY</b>	<b>RAISER</b>
<b>8:00 AM</b>	Oz	Bierwirth
<b>8:45 AM</b>	Fresca	Farr
<b>9:30 AM</b>	Oslo **	Cucurullo
<b>10:30 AM</b>	Ocala	Ames
<b>10:30 AM</b>	Sidney (with Sue)	Tanner
<b>11:15 AM</b>	Sheldon	Quesenberry
<b>NOON</b>	<b>POT LUCK SOCIAL and GENERAL MEETING</b>	
<b>1:30 PM</b>	Van Gogh	Overcash
<b>2:15 PM</b>	Walt	Shinn
<b>3:00 PM</b>	Visa	Sitter (Raiser: Harmeson)

\*\* Beside Pup's name indicates photo needs to be taken by Rick Tanner before or after the General Meeting.

**DIRECTIONS to the SUMMER EVALUATION**

Raleigh Church of Christ  
911 Barringer Dr.  
Raleigh, NC 27606

**Driving Directions to Raleigh Church of Christ for the Summer Evaluation:**

From I-440:

- Take exit 1C, Jones Franklin Rd and drive North approximately 0.35 miles.
- Turn Left onto Barringer Dr and the church building will be on the Right about 0.11 miles.

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**Please Join Us for a Potluck Social!**

When: Saturday August 19, 2007, noon

Where: Raleigh Church of Christ

Who: All volunteers and friends of NCPRP - puppy raisers, sitters, friends, family and prospective volunteers

Program: Guiding Eyes for the Blind 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Retrospective video

Please bring a dish to share. If you live near the evaluation site in the Raleigh area; please bring a casserole, side dish, salad, fruit, cheese, etc. If you are traveling from the Charlotte region or the coast, please bring a dessert. Please also bring your own drinks. Plates, cups, napkins, and utensils will be provided by GEB.

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**Donate to GEB When Shopping at Food Lion!**

LionShop & Share is the easiest, most convenient way to raise money for your local not-for-profit organization. Each time you shop at Food Lion and use your MVP card, a portion of your total grocery purchase will be donated to Guiding Eyes for the Blind.

If anyone is interested in participating, please go to the Food Lion website listed below and click the 'Select an Organization' button. In the pop up window, select NC as the State, Pittsboro the City, select Guiding Eyes for the Blind as the Organization and then follow the instructions to link your MVP card.

<https://www.foodlion.com/IntheCommunity/ShopandShare/secure/RegisterMVPCards.asp>

## UPCOMING EVENTS: 2007

### August 17-18, 2007

Evaluation, Raleigh, NC  
Raleigh Church of Christ

### November 2-3, 2007

Evaluation, Apex, NC  
Prince of Peace Episcopal Church

## MISSION STATEMENT

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Guiding Eyes for the Blind is dedicated to enriching the lives of blind and visually impaired men and women by providing them with the freedom to travel safely, thereby assuring greater independence, dignity and new horizons of opportunity.

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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Charlotte Area: Julie Haynes 704.821.6521  
Area Coordinators: Sherry & Don Dodson 919.642.0185  
**WEBSITES:** [www.guidingeyes.org](http://www.guidingeyes.org)  
[www.guidingeyesnc.org](http://www.guidingeyesnc.org)



**North Carolina Puppy Raising Program**  
**P.O Box 214**  
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