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# Puppy Prints



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North Carolina Puppy Raising Program Newsletter

Winter 2005

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## **Congratulations to the NCPRP's latest Graduates: Caper, Camille and Gwen!!!**

In late 2004, Caper and Camille graduated from Guiding Eyes for the Blind and Gwen graduated as an officer from the Connecticut State Police. Caper is now living in Massachusetts, Camille is living in Delaware and Gwen, is an officer with an undercover police officer in Connecticut.

### **Our Early Christmas Gift!**

**By Belvie Gilleland**

What comes right in the middle of Thanksgiving and Christmas craziness, studying for college exams and preparing for the New Year? A huge celebration, of course - GEB graduation! This year, once again, my daughter, Catherine and I headed to NY for a guide dog graduation (our first puppy graduated in Dec. 2002)!! Camille, our family's 3<sup>rd</sup> guide dog puppy was graduating with her partner, Kim, on Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>!

Camille came into our lives, after pleas of, "Mom, ppppllllease, can we start another GEB pup before I go off to college. I realllly want to help raise another one!! Please?!?" So, in early March '03, Camille joined our menagerie of 2 pet dogs, 2 cats, a rabbit, and a guinea pig. Catherine & I shared most of the "puppy duties" and we all enjoyed Camille's first few weeks immensely!

As Easter approached, we planned a trip to the Outer banks of NC, in order to properly socialize the puppy, right?!? To our surprise, our 2<sup>nd</sup> GEB pup, Halo, in training at the time, had plans to return to NC! Guide dog work was not meant for her. So, after frolicking on the beach and exploring the coastline we were reunited with our "angel-girl", Halo. "The more the merrier", as they say!! Halo and Camille became best buddies enjoying daily walks and playtimes together. Somehow, Halo always seemed to "know" when Camille was going out for one of her "work sessions" as she did not attempt to go to the door. She just gave us those sad eyes and would lie down as if to say, "I'll be here when you get back."

As Camille grew, she showed us just how intelligent she was and what a strong will she had! She always seemed to want to be "the big dog" in a little body. I guess she will always have a need to show her spunkiness, as she still weighs in at only 52 lbs! Camille's personality seems to say, "Life is to be experienced - play hard, love deep, and be all you can be!" This little "spunky girl" loves every minute of living! Her energy and enthusiasm sometimes far outshined mine and at times even Catherine's!! Camille arose early, ready for each new day and eager to learn another new lesson. Wow, if we all could keep that spark alive what wonders we could accomplish!!



Graduates Kim and GEB Camille



Kim and GEB Camille during their pre-graduation training in Manhattan

She wiggled her way through people and across streets like a pro. I was proud and humbled at the very sight of it all. Afterwards, I was allowed to greet her. There is no doubt in my mind that she was glad to see me - best puppy hugs ever!

At graduation, Catherine and I gathered with other puppy raisers in the training school lobby, hoping for a glimpse of Camille and her partner. We were thrilled to see them as they went out to "park". During the ceremony, Kim expressed her gratitude to the puppy raisers, staff, and volunteers at GEB while Camille, curled in a little ball, disappeared beneath her chair - harness and all! Kim said, "I knew everything was going to work out okay when Camille first greeted me - she almost knocked me down with her love". Afterwards, Camille let Catherine and I know she had not forgotten her first family as she lavished puppy kisses and hugs on us which we greatly appreciated. Kim is such a warm, positive, upbeat person. She truly is a reflection of Camille's spirit! I remember thinking "they are good for each other!" So, for us, this year, Christmas came early - time stopped for a little while - and we reconnected with a four-footed friend who deeply touched our lives and now shares her life's journey with someone who needs her love and her eyes more than we need her presence. We feel her absence, but are thankful for the bright beginning she has given Kim and hope for a long, happy future for them both!! Thank you to everyone who helped us help Camille reach her potential! Happy travels Kim!

*Camille's vet sponsor was Jordan Veterinary Associates of Lexington and her food sponsor was Grace Episcopal Church and Bill and Leann Distler.*

## **Bonnie LaRose & Caper**

Below is the graduation profile of Bonnie LaRose and Caper, who was raised by Brenda Quesenberry of Franklin, VA. Profiles of each graduating class are posted on GEB's website ([www.guidingeyes.org](http://www.guidingeyes.org)).

Bonnie LaRose hails from Watertown, Massachusetts, also the hometown of fellow classmate, Ruth Gurney. Caper is Bonnie's fifth Guiding Eyes dog. As Bonnie describes her, Caper certainly fulfills Webster's definition of her name: "frolicsome, cute as a button, and a little love." When asked about her other GEB dogs, Bonnie said that they each had their own distinct and endearing personality traits that made each a valuable guide and precious companion. Bonnie, now 56 years old, was born with Congenital Glaucoma, and after multiple corneal transplants became blind at the age of 31. She readily admits that it took a bit of time for her to adjust to her blindness, but through the years has "simmered down" and now describes herself as a very social and happy person. She acquired skills as a

medical transcriber at the Massachusetts University Health Services and later worked from her home. While extolling the present GEB Training staff, Bonnie reminisced of the "old days" when, as she explained, "All the training instructors were men!" But she quickly added her approval of the addition of women, explaining emphatically, "I have always felt that GEB is the best school." Bonnie's hobbies and interests have included collecting porcelain dolls, music boxes and a valuable bell collection. She said she feels that she and Caper have bonded already and then whispered: "When we get home, she'll be at my side day and night." Bonnie knows that Caper will enable her to go out on her own and to walk and enjoy the neighborhood; and she'll be great company besides. What more can you ask?



Graduates Bonnie and GEB Caper

*Caper's vet sponsor was Southampton Veterinary Clinic and Brenda and Gerry were her food sponsors.*

## OFFICER GWEN

Gwen graduated from the Connecticut State Police on November 4<sup>th</sup>. She was raised by Mary Jane Gibbons of Waynesville, NC along with the help of her dedicated puppy sitters Norm and Jeannie Herrmann of Etowah, NC. Gwen's vet sponsor was Canton Animal Hospital of Canton, NC and her food sponsor was Saturn of Asheville.

Upon hearing of Gwen's release from the training program at Guiding Eyes, Mary Jane said *"It would have been wonderful to keep her as a pet, but it would have been unfair to do it when she had the chance to have another career. I understand that she really impressed the trainers at the academy. She has definitely found the right place for her. So many people had a hand in Gwen: sitting, puppy classes, socializing. We can all be very proud of "Officer Gwen"."* Norm and Jeannie Herrmann said that Gwen, in her new career, *"seemed incredibly happy with him and seemed gung ho about doing the work...Everyone was raving about their youngest graduate...She's going places that's for sure..."*

## Meet NCPRP's Newest Puppies!

**Breezy**, a female black lab, is being raised by first-time raiser Caryn Fellows of New York who is in Vass, NC for the next 4 months before returning back to her puppy raising region in New York. Caryn and Breezy will be in Raleigh for the February evaluation and will also be attending the Triangle-area classes. Welcome Caryn and Breezy!

**Dustin**, a male black lab, is being raised by first-time raiser Allison Spain of Greenville, NC. Dustin's vet sponsor is Animal Hospital of Greenville, NC and Allen and Donna Spain are his food sponsors.

**Lucas**, a male Golden Retriever, is being raised by first-time raiser Sally Neve and family of Durham, NC. Lucas' vet sponsor is North Paw Animal Hospital of Durham and his food sponsors are Rick and Sue Copland of Hillsborough, NC.



Lucas

**Sherman**, a male black lab, is being raised by Julie Haynes and family of Indian Trail, NC. Sherman is Julie's 5<sup>th</sup> GEB puppy. Sherman's vet sponsor is Animal Care Hospital of Matthews and his food sponsors are Diana Brown, along with Gina Bartlett and Rick Gutierrez, who are sponsoring Sherman in memory of their friend and coworker, Larry Pannell.

*Sherman is truly a joy! He is a sweet, easy-going pup and has captured the heart of everyone he meets. Since he joined us in October, he has accompanied me regularly to Wesley Chapel Elementary School where I am a teacher assistant for a second grade class. It has been an excellent experience for him and for the children who look forward to our weekly "Guiding Eyes" lessons, many of which are based on the "In Honor of Diversity" program co-authored by puppy raiser Carol Cutler. Our most recent lesson covered dog anatomy where the children learned canine terminology by identifying parts on a large dog poster and then by touching Sherman. I'm not sure who enjoyed it more, the kids or Sherman who loves to be touched! The students are also helping to measure and chart Sherman's growth each month. For his part, Sherman is quickly mastering his classroom and hallway manners and gets lots of practice with greetings and sit/stays for distractions.*



Sherman with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade class at Wesley Chapel Elementary

**Ogden**, a male Golden Retriever, is being raised by Jackie and Bob Schmidt of Merritt, NC. Ogden is the Schmidt's 7<sup>th</sup> puppy. His veterinary sponsor is Oriental Village Veterinary Hospital and his food sponsor is Kathy Bates of Oriental, NC.

**Wisdom**, a female black lab, is being raised by Chris Echols along with husband Rick, daughter Emily and son Ryan, all of Raleigh, NC. Wisdom is the Echols' 2<sup>nd</sup> GEB puppy. Her veterinary sponsor is Armadale Animal Hospital of Raleigh and the Echols family is her food sponsor. Chris provided the following on Wisdom:

*Wisdom is my second puppy and she is just wonderful! When my time with Madison (pup #1) was coming to an end I wondered how I would feel about pup #2. Let me tell you the transition took about one second! We traveled to Washington to pick her up and I have not looked back since. I miss Madison greatly but now I am busy and challenged with Wisdom. I have stopped comparing the two and finally stopped calling her Madison!! When in doubt, "Puppy! Puppy!" always works!*



Ogden

**Ralph**, a male black lab, (and Rainbow's brother), is being raised by Danny Overcash of Mooresville, Ralph is the Overcash's 8<sup>th</sup> GEB puppy. Ralph's vet sponsor is Lakewood Veterinary Hospital and his food sponsor is the Overcash family.

**Rainbow**, a female yellow lab, is being raised by Kay and Glenn Jackson of Raleigh, NC. Rainbow is the Jackson's 6<sup>th</sup> GEB puppy. Glacier's vet sponsor is Swift Creek Animal Hospital of Raleigh and her food sponsor is Art and Mary Lockwood of Raleigh.

## Where are they now?

**Glacier**, a female yellow lab raised by Kay and Glenn Jackson of Raleigh, NC is in the Special Needs program at Guiding Eyes for the Blind. The Special Needs program is for blind individuals who have, in addition to blindness, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, balance problems, and hearing impairments, including individuals who are Deaf-Blind and communicate by American Sign Language. Glacier is the Jackson's 5<sup>th</sup> GEB puppy. Glacier's vet sponsor was Swift Creek Animal Hospital of Raleigh and her food sponsor was Art and Mary Lockwood of Raleigh.

**Madison**, a female black lab raised by Chris Echols and family of Raleigh, NC passed her in-for-training test in November! Madison is currently being evaluated for the breeding program. Her veterinary sponsor is Armadale Animal Hospital of Raleigh and the Echols family is her food sponsor.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Cheyenne, Gaston and Jules are still in training. Eddie and Hanley will graduate with the in-home training program and more about their new careers will be in the next newsletter.

### In Loving Memory

#### Ura

April 29, 1992 - August 26, 2004

**Ura**, a female yellow lab raised by the late Marjorie Hall of Southern Pines, NC who adopted Ura when she was released from training. Ura's vet sponsor was Yadkin Park Animal Hospital of Southern Pines and her food sponsor were Mr. John Kesead of Poe's Citco and Mr. and Mrs. Bruce McMillan of Southern Pines. Ura was adopted by Amory and Glenn Sheffield after Marjorie's death and lived her final years with them.

#### Dusty

July 6, 1987 - July 31, 2004

**Dusty**, a black male raised by Marcia Keith recently passed away. Dusty was a faithful guide dog for Lil Wyer of Pennsylvania for nine years. Dusty's vet sponsor was WNC Veterinary Hospital of Arden, NC and his food sponsor was the Iam's distributor of Greensboro, NC. Below is a letter to Don & Sherry from Marcia.

Dear Sherry and Don,

This is very difficult to write. I have put this off for two months already but it is time to let you know about Dusty. He had been aging visibly for several months and having more and more trouble getting around. I had bought a harness in the spring so I could assist him in going up and down our three steps and made a ramp to get him and and out of the van. He had arthritis which was getting progressively worse and also had vision and hearing losses but by and large he had no major medical problems. On July 30<sup>th</sup> I received my copy of the summer edition of Puppy Prints. Tansy's obituary was in it. It was just what I needed to make a decision I had put off too long. There was no question that I was being selfish also. I had so hoped Dusty would go peacefully in his sleep one night but that was not to be.

My friend and neighbor, Ruth, volunteers with a veterinary's office and agreed to help me with the final step. We took Dusty the morning of July 31<sup>st</sup>. I couldn't stay with him. It was just too emotional. I am having a hard time



Dusty as a puppy

writing this through my tears right now. Dr. Hutsell knew Dusty's history and a note he sent to me afterward said "your decision was best for Dusty, he had a great life and a very long one. He is at peace without pain and should be remembered as a proud and giving individual."

A friend advised me to write a celebration of the seventeen years of his life rather than a lament for my loss. Dusty entered my life as an eight week old puppy in September of 1987. I had learned of the NCPRP from an article in the Asheville Citizen-Times about a puppy being raised locally. I met with the raiser and was put in touch with Sharon Smith and ultimately came to Raleigh to pick up "my" puppy at an evaluation. Dusty had been donated by Duckback Kennels and was adorable, black with brindle markings on his face and paws. His sire was Black and Decker and the kennel wanted to name him Dustbuster because of the dusty look to his paws. I knicknamed him Dusty for ease.

This was my first dog of any type since I had a cocker spaniel as a child. Needless to say it was an eye opening experience. I brought him into a two cat home. A Siamese and a Himalyan. It was a learning experience from the outset. We all adjusted over time and in September of 1988 I took him to the Raleigh airport for IFT. That was probably the second hardest time in my history with Dusty. It was so sad to see his look of bewilderment when I left him and harder still to return home without a dog in the house. He did well and I went to his graduation in December of 1988 and met his new companion Lil Wyer from Upper Darby, PA. He worked for her in and around Philadelphia for nine years including daily trips to the main downtown post office via bus and subway where she worked. I kept in touch with Lil throughout the years and visited with her and Dusty twice in PA. And they came once to the mountains to visit us. It was wonderful to maintain a connection with both of them and led to his returning later.

Dusty retired in April of 1997 due to vision loss which made guiding at night difficult. He came back to NC to live out his retired years. This time into a household with three dogs (two labs) and two cats. But he had another mission to work on. He spent his days at the Oaks, a nursing home down the block from where I worked. It was like a doggy day care. I took him in the morning on my way to work and picked him up on my way home. All the patients, staff and visitors fell in love with him. He retired a second time when I retired and lived out his years in relative peace.

## **We Want YOU! At the Triangle-Area Puppy Classes!**

- Who: Puppy Raisers, Puppy Sitters, Friends of GEB and potential volunteers  
When: Wednesday evenings at 7PM  
Where: Variety of locations throughout the Triangle  
How: E-mail Trudy Pendergraft at [trudybp@hotmail.com](mailto:trudybp@hotmail.com) to be added to the puppy class e-mail distribution list to receive information about the date, time and location of upcoming puppy classes!

### **ATTENTION ALL PUPPY RAISERS:**

Please bring an accurate reading of your puppy's weight to the next evaluation and don't forget to fill out a Quarterly Evaluation Report ([www.guidingeyesbcweb.org](http://www.guidingeyesbcweb.org))!

Congratulations to Richard and Brenda Yercheck on their new arrival, Gabrielle Elise, born September 25th, 2004.

## EVALUATION SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, February 18<sup>th</sup> and SATURDAY, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2005  
Raleigh Church of Christ, Raleigh, NC

<b>Friday 2/18</b>	<b>PUPPY</b>	<b>RAISER</b>
12:30 PM	Newton	Cooke
1:15 PM	Rainbow *	Jackson
2:00 PM	Rocky	Bennett
2:30 PM	Benny	Geiner
3:15 PM	Wisdom *	Echols
4:00 PM	Lucas *	Neve
5:00 PM	BJ	Rosenthal
5:45 PM	Breezy	Fellows
6:45 PM	Opal	Anderson
7:30 PM	Othello	Davan
<b>Saturday 2/19</b>	<b>PUPPY</b>	<b>RAISER</b>
8:00 AM	Kiley	Bierwirth
8:30 AM	Dan *	Pendergraft
9:00 AM	Vanilla	Shamblin
9:30 AM	Lenny	Barnett
10:00AM	Jordan	Tanner
10:30 AM	Ralph *	Overcash
11:15 AM	Belinda	Quesenberry
12:00 PM	<b>General Meeting and Lunch</b>	
1:00 PM	Roxy	Piron
1:30 PM	Kristoff	Stoddart
2:15 PM	Sherman *	Haynes
3:00 PM	Dustin *	Spain
4:00 PM	Ogden *	Schmidt

\* Beside Pup's name and Raiser's name indicates need for photograph by Rick Tanner near time of General Meeting (not during, please). If you can't make it then, please discuss with Sherry or Sharon.

### Driving Directions to Raleigh Church of Christ for Winter Evaluation:

From I-440:

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

## UPCOMING EVENTS - 2004 & 2005 MISSION STATEMENT

### February 18-19, 2005

Raleigh Church of Christ, Raleigh, NC

### April 22-23, 2005

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Raleigh, NC

### August 5-6, 2005

Raleigh Church of Christ, Raleigh, NC

### November 11-12, 2005

Evaluation, location TBD

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.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Guiding Eyes for the Blind

North Carolina Puppy Raising Program

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Western Area: Mary Jane Gibbons 828.926.3501

Area Coordinators: Sherry&Don Dodson 919.642.0185

**WEBSITES:** [www.guidingeyes.org](http://www.guidingeyes.org)

[www.guidingeyesnc.org](http://www.guidingeyesnc.org)

Special thanks to Rick and Chris Echols of Total Laser Care of NC for sponsoring to offset the printing charges for this newsletter.



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