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# Puppy Prints



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North Carolina Puppy Raising Program Newsletter

Winter 2004

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**CONGRATULATIONS to the NCPRP's Graduates - Fallon, Badger and Porsche!**

## Fallon Fulfills Her Destiny

By Sharon Cooke

Wow! As I look at Fallon's graduation picture a thousand thoughts and images run through my mind. I wish that I were writing to share the details of her graduation with you but sadly, work schedules and a major winter storm prevented that from happening. So I am limited to reflections of the time that that energetic bundle of puppy was a part of our family. Fallon came to us at the tender age of 6 months but she already seemed to know that she was destined for something special---she just hadn't quite figured out what that "something" would be. And to tell you the truth, neither had we. During the next few months, she taught us how to be better puppy raisers. She never failed to emphasize the necessity for consistency, compassion, and kind but firm leadership. When we would forget or get a little lazy, Fallon was quick to remind us and she always rewarded us with her love and devotion. It soon became clear to us that Fallon would never be happy as just a pet or as a "couch potato." She was always happiest when she was out 'working' and never failed to impress everyone with her stellar behavior. So, when we got the word that Fallon was being assigned to the December graduating class we were thrilled. Our hope then became that she would be matched with someone who would love her as much as we knew that she would love them.

As you already know, we did not get to meet Fallon's person, Corrine, face to face but if pictures are really worth a thousand words, I think they are a perfect match. You can see for yourself that Fallon looks like she has finally found her place in life. I know that Corrine is a lucky young woman to have her. Fallon would probably say that that works both ways. Presently, Corrine and Fallon are living and working in Gimli, Manitoba, Canada.



Corrine and Fallon on their Graduation day

*Fallon's vet sponsor was Northwoods Animal Hospital of Cary, NC and Norma and Al Bergeron of Burlington were her food sponsors.*

## Connecticut State Trooper 9031 - Badger

By Glynis Gore and Rick Tanner

We knew fairly early on that GEB-7B400 was no ordinary pup. Possessed (and that is the operative word) of a keen intelligence and restless spirit, Badger was both a challenge and a delight to raise. His eagerness made it fairly easy to correct him, but his strong will and extraordinary strength made correction a constant endurance test. He demanded and received 3 or more hours of exercise daily: long walks, ball chasing, play dates, and just general running around the yard at high speeds. To a person, those who saw Badger said that he was a fine specimen of dog. Vet sponsor Dr. Wally Diehl gathered all the vets in his practice into his examining room and said: "This is what a Labrador Retriever should look like."

It is clear now that Badger insisted on that level of fitness training so that he could fulfill his role in life. It is not every dog that can pass the tests which our law enforcement agencies use to select their working dogs. Badger was selected by the Connecticut State Police for their Drug Detection program. This year's canine training class had four troopers matched with four dogs in an intensive 3 month process. The dogs are trained to find 6 types of controlled substances as well as tainted money and receive a food reward when they are successful (at last, Badger's love of "find the ball" is rewarded with food! What more could a boy want?). That training is reinforced daily, the dogs must successfully find drugs before they receive their meals. We were informed that Badger used his physical size and strength to ... er ... dominate the class.



Trooper Badger looking handsome on graduation day

The graduation ceremony was moving. Puppy-raisers witnessed the teams receiving recognition for their hard work in training, and the troopers testified with tears to the strong bonds formed with their dogs. GEB-7B400 was now officially CST-9031. The Trooper Ed Peshka is Badger's partner-handler and they are on duty at Bradley International Airport in Harford, CT. At the end of their shift Badger goes home with Ed to his family. Luckily for Badger, five-year old Ed has completely adopted him as his own (the neck-strangling hugs say it all), there is an older dog in the home (yippee, a play mate!), and Melissa enjoys Badger at her feet when she cooks (I admit - I let him sniff but he didn't get to taste!). Each dog finds their destiny and we puppy raisers are privileged to facilitate that process. For the brief time that we work with these dogs, we leave our love in their hearts and minds which provides them the confidence they need to excel. Lucky us.

*Badger's vet sponsor was Timberlyne Animal Hospital of Chapel Hill, NC. Rick and Glynis were his food sponsors.*

## ATF Arson Detection K9 Porsche's Graduation

By Susan Piron and Joe Brown

Arson Detection K-9 Porsche and her partner, Lt Arthur Czajkowski, graduated from the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Arson Detection program on December 17, 2003. Joe and I wanted to be a part of Porsche's graduation, see the ATF facilities and check out her new partner of which the only thing we knew of this person was that he was from Philadelphia.

Joe and I arrived at the Quality Inn, in Front Royal, Virginia the day before graduation with two of Porsche's grandmothers and as we checked in we admired the wall of ATF graduate photos from years before hanging in the lobby. I was glad we were staying where the handlers and their pups stayed and hoped to get a glimpse of Porsche before the formalities in the morning, it was not to be even though I hung around the parking lot, like a groupie, waiting for a sighting...

That evening we walked around main street enjoying the historic architecture and getting in a little more holiday shopping at some of the quaint antique shops and cafes. The next morning I was up at dawn very excited but to gray and cloudy skies with snow in the forecast and still no sighting of Porsche. I finally accosted an agent getting out of a marked Fire Marshall vehicle and inquired if he was from Philadelphia. He was very friendly and considerate and told me Art was from Philly and that "Porsche was Awesome"!!

We admired the snowy mountain scenery on the way to the ATF facilities and hoped the snow in the forecast would hold off 'til afternoon. The graduation was held in a large community room and preceding the ceremony we listened to the buzz from trainers, staff, handlers and their families some of which had traveled long distances to see their family members graduate with their new partner pups.... I still had not seen this "Art guy." While waiting to meet Art, we spoke with Randy, a trainer, who filled us in that Art, as senior handler had the first pick of pups and after working with all eight candidates, he chose Porsche. This "Art guy" was sounding better all the time. A few minutes later Art came up, introduced himself and gave me the most heartfelt hug, a picture of the graduating teams and a commemorative leash and collar with the ATF arson K-9 logo and then thanked ME for all I had done for Porsche. We in turn presented Art with a photo album with Porsche's baby pictures, pictures of her outings and growth landmarks and articles from our local newspapers. Also a quilt that was hand made for Porsche by two of my co-workers with the trademark yellow and blue GEB colors, which also happen to be the ATF colors... We spent several minutes before the ceremony learning all about Art, his career, his family, his likes and dislikes, I'm sure he felt like he was under investigation. It turns out Art likes to boat and fish and was hoping Porsche would be OK on a boat. I assured Art that having been raised on Lake Gaston, Porsche was always the first aboard and very comfortable on the water or in the water. Art as senior graduate, addressed the audience and spoke highly and thoughtfully of the trainers and staff they had worked and trained with for the last four weeks. The ATF trainers profusely thanked the raisers and recognized each one of us for the job that we had done to get the pups to this point in their careers.

The ceremony was brief and while we enjoyed the information we really wanted to know was where were the pups? Finally the handlers were released to bring in the pups and we all waited anxiously for a glimpse of our kids. Porsche was absolutely beautiful. She had filled out through her upper body and her black fur was shiny, soft and literally glistened.

As soon as I saw her, I dropped to my knees and she ran up and gave me a big sloppy kiss, she then greeted all the family, especially my mother, who I'm sure she remembered would visit with her six dogs and spend the day swimming and playing in puppy paradise. Art was extremely generous in letting Joe and I spend time with Porsche two on one and also with his time telling stories of their training the past several weeks. It turns out that Porsche is Art's third ATF pup and the two retired ATF dogs live with Art and his wife in their home in Philly. Even though Porsche spent time with everyone who was willing to pat her you could tell she had her attention on Art. Her name had not been changed but Art used "babe" a whole lot when he spoke to her and you could tell from her body language that he was her guy.

Following the graduation as we enjoyed coffee and desert, we watched the films of our dogs training with their new partners and the trainers explained the process to us. The forecast was correct and by this time the snow was coming down hard. Originally, Art and Porsche were going to spend the afternoon and enjoy the tour with us but we assured him that we understood completely if he wanted to get started home to Philly before the weather got too bad and considering that he had been away from home for weeks training, we knew he really needed to get going. We exchanged contact info and promised to keep in touch.

We were then chauffeured around the state of the art facility by several of the trainers and were very impressed with the level of care and concern the dogs receive from trainers, staff and handlers alike. Jane Russenberger had told us "they treat you very well up there" but we had no idea that we would be honored quite so much for the role we played.



Susan and Porsche reunite at graduation

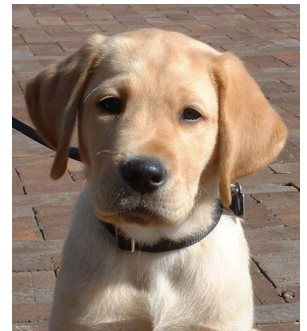
The snow continued to accumulate and we left Front Royal feeling really good about Porsche and the whole ATF program. Since the graduation, Art has sent pictures and called to let us know he and Porsche had been on several fire calls and that she had performed like a pro. Joe and I had raised Porsche to be part of a successful team, but we had no idea how successful she would be and that she would win the lottery in the partner drawing and become part of an incredible team with Lt. Art Czajkowski!

*Porsche's vet sponsor was Pine Hollow Animal Hospital in Warrenton, NC and her food sponsor was Citizens for Animal Protection of Warren County*

## Meet NCPRP's Newest Puppies!

**Debbie**, a female yellow lab, is being raised by Jackie and Bob Schmidt of Oriental, NC. Debbie is the Schmidt's 6<sup>th</sup> GEB puppy. Her vet sponsor is Oriental Village Veterinary Hospital and the Schmidt's are her food sponsors.

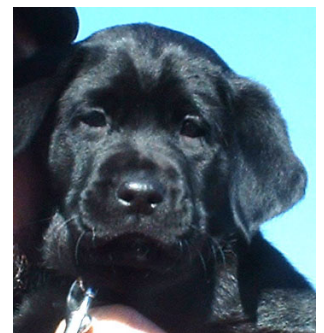
**Gaston**, a male yellow lab, is being raised by Danny and Walt Overcash of Mooresville, NC. Gaston is the Overcash's 7<sup>th</sup> GEB puppy. Gaston's vet sponsor is Lakewood Veterinary Hospital and his food sponsor is the Overcash family. Danny provided the following on Gaston. *Gaston is a spunky little puppy who has moved right in and made himself at home with Wayne and Pawling, our GEB release dogs, and Chocolate and Seal, our two Siamese cats. He is loving and fearless and full of fun. He's filled the void that was left behind... not just in our house but also in the community...when London moved on. He has a growing fan club of people hoping he does well in the program. He's off to a good start but 4 1/2 months old is a little young for predictions so we're just going to enjoy our time with Gaston and hope for the best!*



Gaston

**Glacier**, a female yellow lab (and Gaston's sister), is being raised by Kay Jackson and family of Raleigh, NC. Glacier is Kay's 5<sup>th</sup> GEB puppy and the Jackson's raised Glacier's mother, Garbo. Glacier's vet sponsor is Swift Creek Animal Hospital of Raleigh and her food sponsor is Art and Mary Lockwood of Raleigh.

**Gwen**, a female black lab, is being raised by Mary Jane Gibbons of Waynesville, NC. Jeannie and Norm Herrmann of Etowah, NC will be Gwen's primary sitters and will work with her on socialization. Gwen will be Mary Jane's 8th puppy. Gwen's vet sponsor is Canton Animal Hospital of Canton, NC and her food sponsor is Saturn of Asheville.



Gwen

**Madison**, a female black lab, is being raised by Chris, Rick, Emily and Ryan Echols of Raleigh, NC. This is the Echols family's first puppy, but they have been puppy sitters for well over a year for the NCPRP. Madison is the daughter of Saturn, who was raised by Mary Jane Gibbons of Waynesville, NC. Madison's vet sponsor is Armadale Animal Hospital of Raleigh and her food sponsor is the Echols family. Chris provided the following about Madison. *Madison stole my heart the minute I picked her up! She looked at me, gave me a kiss and then fell asleep in my arms! Everyone I know is so excited about Madison. I feel like there is a whole community helping me raise her. My kids are so proud that I let them help take care of her. Madison has taught them responsibility in a way that I never could. Rick and I will be forever grateful for all that Madison already has and will give us!*

## Where are they now?

**Dutchess**, a 12 month old female German Shepherd, is a home-change puppy who has recently joined the home of Sharon and Andy Cooke of Cary, NC. Dutchess is Sharon's 6th puppy. Her vet sponsor is Western Wake Veterinarian Services and her food sponsor is Norma and Al Bergeron of Burlington, NC.

**Faith**, a female German Shepherd raised by Julie Haynes of Indian Trail, NC was recently released from training due to her energy level and distraction. Faith will return to Jack and Venita Whitaker of Von Wiesbaden German Shepherds, where she was born. Faith's vet sponsor was Animal Care Hospital of Matthews and his food sponsor was the Haynes family.

**Kittle**, a male black lab raised by Susan Shinn and family of Concord, NC, was recently released from training due to a medical problem. The Shinn family is adopting Kittle with open arms. Kittle's vet sponsor was Randall Veterinary Hospital and the Shinn's were his food sponsors.

**Parish**, a male black lab, raised by Melissa Mejia and Tony Moore of Charlotte, NC, recently passed his IFT test with flying colors! His vet sponsor was Animal Medical Hospital of Charlotte and his food sponsor was Melissa and Tony.

**Rhodi**, a female golden retriever, raised by Jackie and Bob Schmidt of Merritt, NC recently went to GEB for her IFT test. While Rhodi did not pass her IFT test at GEB, she is going to give guide work another try at another guide dog school. If she decides that she does not want to be a guide, Jackie and Bob will adopt her. Rhodi's vet sponsor was Oriental Village Veterinary Hospital and the Schmidt's were her food sponsors.

## Baldwin and Therapy Dog International

By Susan Piron and Joe Brown

Baldwin was released from training last September due to allergy issues. Over the summer we had tried to figure out if the problem was environmental in nature or some type of food allergy by limiting his behavior and keeping a diary of his scratching and feet licking. The decision was made for Baldwin to travel to Yorktown Heights for a medical eval and the vets decided to release him because as we know GEB does not match a dog with possible health concerns because of the care factor and possible financial burden it may impose. I on the other hand had the benefit of my sister, a veterinary dermatologist, to help with treatment and who recommended a food trial with rice and venison (Natures Recipe, I wasn't hunting or baking for him), unsalted rice cakes as a snack and absolutely nothing else.

Baldwin had never been overly confident in stressful situations and really didn't want to work too hard when we practiced around town. He was very well behaved and possessed a very mellow, sweet and cuddly disposition and with that in mind we opted to adopt him. Baldwin had done a great job when we traveled for work to meet and greet the public at events such as the Raleigh Chamber of Commerce Business Expo, Boat shows in Raleigh, Richmond, Greensboro and during presentations about puppy raising for GEB to local groups such as the Lake Gaston Lions Club, Littleton Masons, Lake Gaston AARP, Library story hour, public school groups and 4-H and Home School Children at Lake Gaston.

We didn't want Baldwin to be unemployed so while we continue to enjoy public outreach work on behalf of GEB and NCPRP we sought a career that he could handle and we would both enjoy. After speaking with a friend, Lisa Lambert, at the Ronald McDonald House of Durham and learning a little about the Therapy Dog program they worked with,



Baldwin, hard at work

the bulb went off and I thought this is it, Baldwin would certainly enjoy being petted, his most favorite exercise and as active as he likes to get....I searched the web for info on Therapy Dogs and spoke with Sherry Dodson who supplied some names and organizations, I decided to contact TDI or Therapy Dog International and emailed for info. As fate would have it two days later Carole Marshall, an evaluator with TDI walked into our real estate office!!! Carole turned out to be very supportive and after spending a few minutes with Baldwin set up a test within a few weeks. Test day came and I was nervous but Baldwin had no idea what the fuss was about and passed with flying colors. The test consisted of several exercises including basic obedience sit, stay, down and come off lead and on. The largest difference I found was in the leash, while with GEB we learned to use the leash to give signals and TDI wanted voice signals and never a tight leash and I was only allowed to use a buckle collar as opposed to the training collar. We then had to walk under control with loose lead, stop, shake hands and chat without the leash being tight. Baldwin also had to do a sit stay while I walked out of sight for 15 minutes, and don't think I wasn't around the corner sending "good stay vibes". The final part of the test took us to the Warren Hills Nursing Home in Warrenton so Carole could see him under the conditions he would find there, wheelchairs, crutches, oxygen tanks and various ways that residents may interact with him. He did an excellent job with the residents that wanted to pet or talk to him but was most interested in the dancing Santa at the nurses station. The day was a success and Baldwin was on to his new career and right now we're waiting to get his licence so we can start visiting patients both adults and children knowing Baldwin will bring a little joy to some ones day. While we were disappointed that Baldwin would not go on to guide dog training, we do believe that when one door closes another opens.

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## Sherry's Corner

We were saddened to learn of the death of Bigia, a career change pup who was raised by Kathy and Dave Ellis of Raleigh, NC, who adopted her after she was released from GEB. Bigia's vet sponsor was Dave Ellis, DVM of Falls Village Veterinary Hospital and his food sponsor was the Ellis family. Each team in this program has been a significant part of our lives over the years and we thank all of you for your contribution to Guiding Eyes and the North Carolina Puppy Raising Program. So it is with much gratitude and sadness that we say good-bye to these past team members who have left us.

Transportation plans for the North Carolina Puppy Raising Program have ended up being one of our biggest challenges post 9/11. We found ourselves wondering what we were going to do and even if we were going to be able to continue to exist. Where we once had little concern and were able to rely on the airlines to move pups and older dogs to and from New York, this abruptly was no longer the case.

We have been blessed by our own raisers and other NCPRP friends who have been more than willing to rise to the challenge of transporting dogs when they were going up to GEB. We have been equally blessed with total strangers to the NC Puppy Raising Program, but not to the mission of Guiding Eyes, who have been very willing to help move the dogs. We can't thank them enough. We have had raisers from the Virginia Beach, Northern Virginia, Washington, DC and Maryland Puppy Raising Programs transport and help all they could, many times on short notice. They have taken our dogs into their homes until our raisers could travel to pick them up. They have transported retired dogs, small puppies and dogs of ages in between. Other Area Coordinators and Puppy Evaluators have helped us so much. Sometimes making the arrangements has been like working a puzzle but to the credit of everyone concerned, our dogs, that cherished animal, have arrived safe, sound and happy, no matter which way they were going.

So if you encounter one of those "travel angels" any time you are at GEB or in those puppy raising regions, please remember to give them our deep appreciation and heartfelt thanks for their assistance during this time when the skies are not so "friendly" and open to canine travel.

Sherry

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**EVALUATION SCHEDULE**  
**FRIDAY, February 6<sup>th</sup> AND SATURDAY, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2004**  
**Raleigh Church of Christ, Raleigh, NC**

<b>Friday 2/6</b>	<b>PUPPY</b>	<b>RAISER</b>
<b>1:00 PM</b>	Madison	Echols *
<b>2:00 PM</b>	Dutchess	Cooke
<b>2:45 PM</b>	Meeting with Barb P.	
<b>Saturday 2/7</b>	<b>PUPPY</b>	<b>RAISER</b>
<b>8:30 AM</b>	Glacier	Jackson
<b>9:15 AM</b>	Hanley	Bierwirth
<b>9:45 AM</b>	Cheyenne	Shamblin
<b>10:15 AM</b>	Unix	Tanner
<b>10:45 AM</b>	Fletcher	Pendergraft
<b>11:15 AM</b>	Caper	Quesenberry
<b>12:00 PM</b>	---General Meeting and Lunch---	
<b>1:30 PM</b>	Camille	Gilleland
<b>2:00 PM</b>	Gaston	Overcash *
<b>3:00 PM</b>	Jules	Shinn
<b>3:45 PM</b>	New Puppy	Gibbons *
<b>4:45 PM</b>	New Puppy	Sitter for Schmidts

\*Means that Raiser and Pup Need Photo Taken by Rick Tanner on Saturday Around General Meeting Time or Friday by Sharon or Sherry.

**Dinner on Saturday after the last evaluation  
will be discussed at the General Meeting**

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

From I-440 Beltline:

- Take Exit 1-C, Jones Franklin Road, 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

### February 6-7, 2004

Evaluation

Raleigh Church of Christ

### May 7-8, 2004

Evaluation, TBD

### August 13-14, 2004

Evaluation, TBD

### November 5-6, 2004

Evaluation, TBD

## 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.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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Guiding Eyes for the Blind

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Western Area: Mary Jane Gibbons 828.926.3501

Area Coordinators: Sherry&Don Dodson 919.642.0185

**WEBSITES:** [www.guiding-eyes.org](http://www.guiding-eyes.org)

[www.mindspring.com/~mefine/ncprp](http://www.mindspring.com/~mefine/ncprp)



Special thanks to UPS Store and owner/operator Chris Derby of Chapel Hill, NC for sponsoring to offset the printing charges for this newsletter.



**North Carolina Puppy Raising Program**

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