



The District News

April 2012

April is GAL Child Advocate Month



GUARDIAN AD LITEM CHILD ADVOCATE MONTH

2012

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Guardian ad Litem Program, celebrating more than 27 years of child advocacy, has established a distinguished record of public service through its work to enhance the quality of life for children; and

WHEREAS, all 100 counties in North Carolina have a Guardian ad Litem Program; and

WHEREAS, Guardian ad Litem volunteers come from a variety of professional, educational and ethnic backgrounds, acting as advocates for abused and neglected children in the complicated and often unfamiliar court and child welfare systems; and

WHEREAS, the court appoints Guardian ad Litem advocates to serve as officers of the court, helping to improve the quality of information presented to the court, by acting as the court's eyes and ears in the child's life; and

WHEREAS, April has been proclaimed Child Abuse Prevention Month, an observance that reflects the purpose of Guardian ad Litem programs, to protect and defend children from harm and ensure that abused and neglected children are provided with the court-ordered services they need; and

WHEREAS, April is recognized annually in the United States of America as a time to honor the contributions of volunteers through National Volunteer Month, and Guardian ad Litem child advocates donated more than 950,000 hours of service to children in North Carolina in 2011;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim April 2012, as "GUARDIAN AD LITEM CHILD ADVOCATE MONTH" in North Carolina, and urge all North Carolinians to join in this observance.



BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this tenth day of February in the year of our Lord two thousand and twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

GALS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Earlene Conner

Earlene Conner, a dedicated Randolph GAL for nine years, recently won first place for her first quilt in the Randolph County Quilter Guild Show. Earlene makes quilts for the Pregnancy Center as well as lap quilts, bibs and neck pillows for nursing homes. Many organizations benefit from Earlene's multiple talents and dedication to serving our community. She belongs to the Ladies Auxiliary of Military Order of the Purple Heart as well as many others. She is also a terrific grandmother to her grandchildren. Like so many of our terrific GALS, Earlene makes a quiet difference for so many.



Elworth Cheek

Randolph Guardian ad Litem annually has a team to raise money and awareness by walking in The Human Race. The walkers did not let a little rain stop them on Saturday, March 26th. Elworth Cheek, GAL, and president of the GAL Friends Association of Randolph County, also serves on the The Human Race Committee and works very hard to get this organized on our behalf every year. Elworth has been a GAL for over six years, volunteers for Habitat for Humanity as well as many other volunteer endeavors.



The Moore County Friends Association Members, who are GAL volunteers for that county, donated new playground equipment for the Moore County DSS visitation area. This equipment replaces old equipment in the play area that was no longer in use-able condition. The GAL volunteer efforts will facilitate a much needed improvement to the play area that will benefit the children we serve.



Bill Clemons

Bill Clemons, A Moore County GAL volunteer, since June of 1999, has served our program in many capacities. He has been a wonderful volunteer for many children over the last 13 years but has stood in for our attorney advocate and served as a conflict attorney on several difficult cases and as a trainer for several GAL in services. In addition to the GAL work he does so well, Bill raises and trains service dogs. In the picture you can see Nori, a trained service dog that is certified to attend court with children when they must testify Nori is specially trained to sit by their side, not lick and be attentive to the child despite all the distractions in court. The child can then testify to Nori and feel more at ease despite the difficult situation. Because of her service status, Nori even flies with Bill and is an excellent traveler.

APRIL IS ALSO CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION



The Randolph Guardian ad Litem program, in conjunction with the Randolph Partnership for Children participated in the Pinwheels for Prevention Project. From April 2nd through April 6th, area businesses on Sunset Avenue placed pinwheels on their front lawns to draw attention to prevention of child abuse in our community. A pinwheel was placed on display for every abused or neglected child. The project also spread to other businesses in the downtown area and pinwheels are on display in many locals through April 6th.

"Prevention must be proactive"

A Heartfelt Thank You To Our GAL Advocates

Everyday you make a difference in the life of an abused or neglected child. Your time and efforts on their behalf are invaluable. The rewards for your service are few but the impact you have is vast. You may not know the true value of your service for years to come but when you touch the life of a child the difference you make is immense. Thank you for your dedicated service to our children and know that you are appreciated on so many levels for what you do. Our

GAL advocates are the heart and soul of the program and your dedication to this work outstanding. A heartfelt thank you goes out to each and every one of you from the staff and the children for whom you work so tirelessly.

One song can spark a moment,
One flower can wake the dream.
One tree can start a forest,
One bird can herald spring.

One smile begins a friendship,
One handclasp lifts a soul.
One star can guide a ship at sea,
One word can frame the goal.

One vote can change a nation,
One sunbeam lights a room,
One candle wipes out darkness
One laugh will conquer gloom.

One step must start each journey,
One word must start each prayer.
One hope will raise our spirits,
One touch can show you care.

One voice can speak with wisdom,
One heart can know what's true,
One life can make the difference,
You see, IT'S UP TO YOU!

Many Thanks to Jerry Rhoades and Bill Clemons



On March 16th our Moore County attorney advocate, Jerry Rhoades and GAL advocate and conflict attorney advocate, Bill Clemons volunteered their time to provide valuable training to GALs from the entire district. The attorneys focused on the enhancement of skills when called to testify in court. It was a most valuable training session, and we are grateful to our presenters for their donation of their time and expertise.