

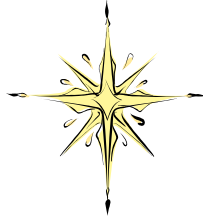
Guardian ad Litem Newsletter

December 2010- February 2011

Our volunteers are the very embodiment of the generous spirit of the Holiday Season. Here's wishing you and your families a safe, healthy, and joyful Holiday Season.

Thank you for all that you do to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the children we serve.

Kathie, Ricki & Cordelia



**Erin
Gries,
Irene Jack,
Debra Forcier, Sally
Kehayes, Susan McRae,
Tara Overton, Linda Tiller,
Carolyn Wilson, Julie Anderson,
Robin Bateman, Melodie Janovetz
Rea Maurice, Carrie McLeod, Gary &
Heidi Montalbine, Julie O'Connor, Judith
Passerini, Karen Pendt, April Poyner, Earl
& Joycelyn Ramey, Sherry Robbins, Sherry Smith
Jean Snider, Angela Stephens, Pamela Wilson, Dave
& Sandy Briggman, Emily Custer, Daphne DeGabrielle
Louise Dow, Ginger Endreson, Madeline Fortunato,
Patricia Frew, Arlene, Herzer, Susanne Kelly, Debbie Lawson,
J.R. Matthews, Sylvia Mattingly, Charles Petty, Deborah Rienenrth,
Jessica Romanczyk, Patricia Rusk,
Claudette Smith, Paige Spruill,
Alice Stewart, Jody Stowe,
Debra Tierney, Lycurgas
Harrell, Lena Council,
Reginald & Eileen Edlow, Cecilia Hathaway, Fiona Hiser,
Patsy Huffman, Vivian Hunter, Jeneen Jackson, Ken
Lightell, Margaret Lumsden, Donald & Roberta
McCabe, Regina Midgett, Mary Payan, Darlene
Pineda, Kristy Poyner, Shurica Poyner,
Patricia Rogers, Mark Schomers, Carolyn
LaFleur, Ken Ries, Barbara Sicilia**

Guardian ad Litem Volunteers Take Oath to Become Officers of the Court

Five new volunteers were sworn in as Guardians ad Litem at the Dare County Court House on November 1, 2010. The Honorable Judge Amber Davis presided over the ceremony.

Pictured are Patricia Rusk, J.R. Mathews, Deborah Rienerth, Sylvia Mattingly and Jody Stowe of Dare County.

Jeneen Jackson of Pasquotank County was sworn in as a Guardian ad Litem at the the Chowan County Courthouse on November 2, 2010 by The Honorable Judge Robert P. Trivette.



Save the Date

January 11, 2011

**Court Improvement Project Training
For All Juvenile Court Stakeholders**

Details to follow



You're Invited

**In-Service Training and
Holiday Pot Luck Luncheon
(Bring Recipes)**

**In-Service Training Presented by
System of Care Coordinator
East Carolina Behavioral Health
Sarah Massey**

**December 17, 2010
11:00 - 1:30 p.m.**

**N.C. Cooperative Extension Building
Currituck County Center
120 Community Way
Barco, NC 27917**

Christmas in Foster Care

Adam Robe
author of the Robbie Rabbit series

As we approach the upcoming holidays, I am reminded how this time of year can be especially difficult for children in foster care.

I remember Christmas Day as a child in care; my sister and I (both in the same placement) would race to the tree to see if Santa brought us everything we wanted. After we demolished the living room, I'd look around and see everyone laughing and having a good time. But inside, I felt that I didn't belong and all I wanted was to be at home with my family. I'd head to my room, wondering what my mom and brother were doing. Were they thinking of me? I knew I missed Christmas at home with them.

Sadly, no one in my foster home knew (or publicly acknowledged) that I was struggling with these feelings. My foster parents never talked to me about my biological family, nor did they ask how I used to celebrate the holiday with my family. I believe those conversations were never held because the professionals in my life feared what could come of them. Would I start misbehaving? Would it make me sad? Starting this conversation with me could have opened the door to a more meaningful relationship. It may have helped me open up about how I was feeling inside.

As professionals in the foster care system, we have a responsibility to the children in our care to recognize -- and acknowledge -- each child's history. We should help children embrace their identity by recognizing their past as an important part of who these children are.

So, where do you start? Here are a few examples you can use this holiday season:

Don't assume that a child celebrates Christmas.

- Find out what traditions the child had in his/her home and incorporate one or two into your celebration (with their permission). Even if you have a number of foster children in your home, this is possible with little work.
- Start a new tradition and explain how they are a part of it.
- Share stories of previous Christmases.
- Document the night with pictures and create a scrapbook for the child to take with them.
- If it is OK with the treatment team and court, allow the child to call his/her parent(s) and sibling(s).
- Treat each child the same in your home, regardless of whether the child is a biological or foster child.

In my house, we pick a night to hang ornaments on the tree, listen to Christmas music and decorate the living room with knick-knacks. At the end of the night, when everything is ready, my children climb to the top of the ladder and gently put the Christmas Angel on the tree. These are memories that we'll all share forever.

Remember, no matter what the reason was for the removal of a child from his/her biological family, the child has good memories, too. Let the child share them with you.

Congratulations Are in Order!!!!

The GAL Program of the First Judicial District is proud to announce that the following Guardians received the 2010 Governor's Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service.

Both recipients will receive a letter and an award pin from Governor Perdue recognizing their hard work in providing advocacy to children and their commitment to excellence.

Daphne DeGabrielle – Dare County

Daphne DeGabrielle has been a GAL for over ten (10) years. She has made an enormous impact on the lives of the children she has represented over the years. She has served one family this past year and has gone above and beyond the call of duty to help them be successful. She has found work opportunities for them, provided them with transportation & been a kind listening ear when they needed support. In an effort to help the children she has been a strong voice in court; advocating for services and family involvement. Daphne has supported the family reunification plan and has testified in court. She is always on time and efficient. Her court reports are very concise and well written. A GAL is expected to become a part of the child client's life and yet maintain objectivity about their best interest. Daphne excels at being able to care for the family but also know the boundaries of her role. The GAL Program requires more of its volunteers than other programs, and she never falters. She is always willing to take a case no matter how difficult the situation. Faithfully, she keeps up with her cases, calling her contacts regularly, and visiting her child clients every month. Daphne goes out of her way to find resources and services needed for children and their families. She works diligently with social workers to help a case move as quickly as possible toward permanence. Our program and the community at-large are greatly enhanced because of Daphne's dedication.



Susan McRae- Chowan County

Susan McRae possesses many admirable skills. She is organized, mission focused and an excellent communicator. Susan is able to approach the important work of the Guardian ad Litem gently and professionally. Everyone that works with her appreciates her cooperative spirit. She writes clear, concise, child focused court reports and submits them well in advance of court. She has testified several times and been complimented by the Judge for her hard work and her objectivity. Susan had a very adversarial and challenging case this past year. She likely spent 100's of hours working to advocate for her child client.

Birthdays



Ginger Endreson	December	1
Carolyn Wilson	December	9
Kenneth Ries	December	13
Sandra Florez	December	19
Jessica Romanczyk	December	27
Erin Gries	December	23

Arlene Herzer	January	1
Rea Maurice	January	4
Reginald Edlow	January	13
Eileen Edlow	January	14
Cecilia Hathaway	January	15
Susan McRae	January	18

Lena Council	February	7
Susanne Kelly	February	9
Patsy Huffman	February	11
Sandra Briggman	February	16
Carolyn LaFleur	February	19
Jeannie Brake	February	25

DECEMBER 2010

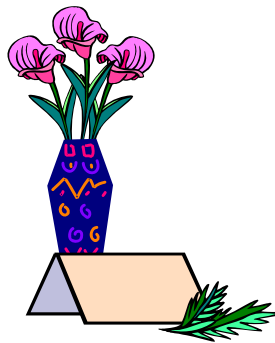
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

JANUARY 2011

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Anniversaries

April Poyner	1 year
Sherry Robbins	1 year
Emily Jo Custer	2 year
Ginger Endreson	2 year
Charles Petty	7 years
Sandra Briggman	7 years
David Briggman	7 years
Deborah Bateman	7 years
Daphne DeGabrielle	7 years
Louise Dow	10 years
Arlene Herzer	10 years
Kenneth Ries	11 years
Julie Anderson	11 years
Jean Snider	11 years
Lena Council	12 years
Lycurgus Harrell	21 years



FEBRUARY 2011

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

Seafood Martini

4 med. Potatoes boiled with skins on.
½ cup chopped celery
½ cup chopped green or Vidalia onions
1 T. red wine or apple cider vinegar
½ to ¾ cup mayonnaise (Hellman's or Duke's)

½ lb. cleaned cooked shrimp
½ lb. Jumbo Lump Crabmeat
1 large lobster tail steamed in Zatarin's crab boil and Old Bay
Lemon (quartered)
Avacado sliced
Chives for garnish

Peel and chop potatoes while still hot, add celery, onions, vinegar and mayonnaise. Salt and pepper to taste.
Spread potato salad out evenly in dish or pan to cool quickly in the refrigerator.

While salad is cooling.

Steam shrimp – cool
Boil Lobster- cool and then chop

Using martini glasses, spoon about 2 T of potato salad into glass.
Add several shrimp, pieces of lump crabmeat and lobster. Drizzle with lemon juice.

Drizzle sliced avocados with lemon juice and finish with chives for garnish.

Chill glasses until ready to serve.

GAL VOLUNTEER REMINDERS

- Please help us to continue to keep our records updated. If you have a new e-mail address, cell phone number, have moved or changed phone numbers, please call the main office with the changes.
- Remember to visit your child at least **once** a month, unless the child is placed out of your county. This is the most important part of your services as a GAL. If you are having a problem making these visits, please call us and we will make arrangements to have someone visit for you.
- **Per Court Order** - Court reports are to be submitted to all parties involved in the case **three (3) days prior to court per our chief District Court Judge**. If you need our office to type your report we will need it **seven (7) days in advance**. **If a report is not submitted within the required time frame, The Court does not have to read the report or consider GAL recommendations. If this happens, your child's voice will not be heard.**
- The GAL Office continues to use a new format for Court Reports for **MONITORING and REVIEW HEARINGS**. It is referred to as Monitoring Court Report. Please follow this report which will help you to focus on your most important duties as you check regularly on how things are going. There is a separate format to use for **TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS**.



Just for Today

Please take a moment to reflect on the following advice. It is taken from a Dear Abby column that is published in newspapers around the country every January.

JUST FOR TODAY I will live through this day only. I will not brood about yesterday or obsess about tomorrow. I will not set far-reaching goals or try to overcome all of my problems at once. I know that I can do something for 24 hours that will overwhelm me if I had to keep it up for a lifetime.

JUST FOR TODAY I will be happy. I will not dwell on thoughts that depress me. If my mind fills with clouds, I will chase them away and fill it with sunshine.

JUST FOR TODAY I will accept what is. I will face reality. I will correct those things that I can correct and accept those I cannot.

JUST FOR TODAY I will improve my mind. I will read something that requires effort, thought and concentration. I will not be a mental loafer.

JUST FOR TODAY I will make a conscious effort to be agreeable. I will be kind and courteous to those who cross my path and I'll not speak ill of others. I'll improve my appearance, speak softly, and not interrupt when someone else is talking. Just for today, I'll refrain from improving anybody but myself.

JUST FOR TODAY I will do something positive to improve my health. If I'm a smoker, I'll quit. If I'm overweight, I'll eat healthy if only just for today. And not only that, I'll get off the couch and take a brisk walk, even if it's only around the block.

JUST FOR TODAY I will gather the courage to do what is right and take responsibility for my own actions.



**SOCIAL SERVICES / GUARDIAN AD LITEM JUVENILE COURT SESSIONS FOR 2011
(JANUARY– JUNE)**

CURRITUCK		DARE		PASQUOTANK		PERQUIMANS	
January 14	(4)	January 18	(3)	January 04	(1)	January 26	(4)
January 18	(4)	February 09	(3)	January 27	(1)	February 23	(4)
March 02	(4)	March 04	(3)	February 17	(1)	March 30	(4)
April 20	(4)	March 24	(3)	March 11	(1)	May 04	(4)
May 10	(4)	April 14	(3)	April 01	(1)	May 25	(4)
June 02	(4)	May 05	(3)	April 26	(1)	June 29	(4)
June 28	(4)	May 27	(3)	May 26			
		June 14	(3)	June 16			
CAMDEN		CHOWAN		GATES			
January 24	(1)	January 20	(5)	January 07	(4)		
February 22	(1)	February 16	(5)	February 03	(4)		
March 17	(1)	March 14	(5)	March 03	(4)		
April 21	(1)	April 15	(5)	April 05	(4)		
May 31	(1)	May 12	(5)	May 09	(4)		
June 17	(1)	June 15	(5)	June 10	(4)		

Codes: (1) Judge C. Christopher Bean
(4) Judge Eula E. Reid

(2) Judge Edgar L. Barnes
(5) Judge Robert P. Trivette

(3) Judge Amber Davis

*Guardian ad Litem Program
1305-D McPherson Street
Elizabeth City, NC 27909*