



GAL News of District 9

October/November 2009

District Administrator's 2 Cents

Fall is my favorite season of the year. A time of color, cooler temperatures, and outdoor festival's galore. GAL has already had a tent at the Creedmoor Music Festival and will be at Frankenfest on Halloween day. Robin Darone, our faithful recruiter is looking for help that day so I hope you can offer an hour of your time. We have a safer, brighter office in Franklin Co. now that there is new carpeting and paint so stop in and see us. This month, I encourage you to check out our new local website www.district9gal.org and be sure to become a fan of **District 9 Guardian ad Litem Volunteers** on Facebook. It's great that so

many of you have already found us. Mike Moore, our web guru is looking to make additions to the web and would like volunteers to exchange some ideas. Mike can be reached at grizzlynt@gmail.com. Our Internet community affords us a way to "get together" around the issues we face as GAL so please contact Mike.

We are in the midst of our final training classes for the year but encourage you to send folks to apply to fill our January class. November 15th marks my fifth year as your District Administrator. What a gift to work for people that know the mission of the organization and work towards that mission

daily! Each GAL I speak with is crystal clear that the focus is always on the best interests of the children. New GAL are amazed at how much can be accomplished by giving just a few hours each month. (1) See the children. (2) Talk with their network of involved individuals and get the facts. (3) Write a report and come to court. Simple tasks that changes lives in the most positive ways. You've changed mine for the better. Thank you for your service and dedication. I will continue to do everything I can to support you in your work. Enjoy the fall and Happy Thanksgiving! -Yours in Service

Mary Jo

District 9 Guardian ad Litem Program



Welcome to our new Volunteers!

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Wanda Buchanan | Tina Dawson |
| Cynthia Hayes | Kathy Henderson |
| Vanita Henderson | Trevon Lucas |
| Alethea Marcellus | Dawn McKinney |
| Queen Queen | Tammy Seavert |
| Kathleen Shefchunas | |
| Pam Stevenson | Sherry Walsh |

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You've Been Busy!

September 2009							
County	GAL Advocates	Family Groups Served By Program	Children Served By Program	Children without Advocates	Hearings Scheduled	Hearings Completed	# of <u>Children</u> Without Permanence >2 years
Franklin	36	43	70	14	1	1	22
Warren	8	4	9	0	4	3	8
Vance	28	32	63	6	22	16	21
Granville	24	30	54	4	15	10	10
TOTAL	96	109	196	24	42	39	61

From your Satellite office

Welcome to 5 new volunteers in Vance and Granville counties!! On September 9, Judge Banks swore in Pam Stevenson, Vanita Henderson, Alethea Marcellus, Kathy Henderson, and Wanda Buchanan. I am so happy to have them on board and look forward to working with each of them!

We continue to need GAL volunteers. If you know of anyone who may be interested, please let us know. Think about family, friends,

neighbors, and co-workers who have the desire to help children. Please send them our way!

I hope you are enjoying this beautiful fall weather and are staying safe in your travels.

Thank you for all you do for the Guardian ad Litem Program and for the children of your community!!

Wynona Thomas, Program Supervisor

"Introduction to GAL Training: Thursday, October 22 at 9:30 a.m. in the Old Courthouse in Vance County."

From Your Program Specialist

Volunteers first I would like to say "thank you" for all you do and your hard work with the children and youth you serve in our four counties. In November I will have been with the program for one year and I have seen a group of people that really work hard for the children. It is our goal as advocates to get permanence for the children as soon as possible. Your investigation in each case plays a big

part in the permanence. Please make sure your reports are in to the office one week prior to court. If anything changes once that report is completed remember you can always do an addendum. Your report is distributed to all parties involved in the case so that your views as a GAL are shared. Again thank you for getting your report in in a timely manner.

If you haven't already please stop

in to visit our office, we recently got a facelift. New carpet and paint. Thank you Franklin County Maintenance Department for your Hard Work. If you attend any trainings related to your position as a Guardian Ad Litem, please provide the office with a copy of your training certificate. As always if you need any assistance with reports or have questions regarding your case, please call the office. -Samantha

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Safe Space Inc. is a non-profit organization, first established in 1995 to assist domestic violence victims and their children. The mission of Safe Space is to reduce relationship violence in Franklin and adjacent communities.

Safe Space has been in service for twelve years now! Mark your calendars for Thursday October 15, 2009. Safe Space will hold the Clothesline Project. The event will be held at the Louisburg Police Training Center at 107 Wade Avenue. The candlelight vigil was held on October 1, 2009 at Louisburg College. This was ceremony to celebrate the victories over domestic violence and to honor the victims. For more information about Safe Space and the event, call 919-797-5599. Safe Space also has a hotline for domestic violence victims, 919-497-5444.

FROM YOUR RECRUITER

Hello all, Hope you've had a nice summer. I did, and I'm certainly ready for fall. With that come preparations for Frankenfest and our Start the Year Out Right (STYOR) event in January. Frankenfest will be held on Sat. Oct 31st on Main St. in Franklinton from 9:00am until 5:00pm. We will be there to give out information about the GAL program. Volunteers are needed to help. If you can give an hour of your time, contact me. I was trying to set up a place for the next 4 County GAL Volunteer Association meeting, but have not had much luck in finding anywhere to do it, so I thought I would take an interest poll first to see who was interested in becoming a member. Membership dues will be \$5 a year, and of course you would be included in deciding what large projects would be beneficial to the GAL program and how to raise money. Please let me know via email (for those who have it) if you are interested. For those who don't; you can reach me at 919-426-9413. I hope to get a lot of response. My email is: r.darone@yahoo.com. We also have a new secretary, Angie Daughtrey. Unfortunately, Deborah Martin-Wright has relocated to another state. I hope to receive larger donations and prizes for the STYOR event now that we have our 501c3 non-profit status. I look forward to hearing from you all and seeing you all very soon.

-Robin

HAPPY HAPPY BIRTHDAY..... OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

October: 2 Dawn Omokunde, 6 Terri Grady, 14 Karen Williams, 14 Joanne Ayscue, 15 Christine Eatmon, 21 Carrie Daniels, 22 Carol Lewis, 23 Tolokun Omokunde

November: 1 Betty Willis, 9 Jessica London, 10 Latonia Glover, 14 Joseph Brown, 17 Angela Daughtrey, 17 Marlene Slaughter, 19 Samantha Branch, 26 Gary Macovitz, 27 Mamie Jones

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Upcoming Court Dates:

Franklin County: Oct 29/Dec 3

Vance County: Oct 6 & 21/Nov 4 & 18

Granville County: Oct 15 /Nov 12

Warren County: Oct 13 & 27/ Nov 24

Upcoming Events:

-**Frankenfest:** Oct 31, 9am-5pm
Downtown Franklinton

-**Start the year out Right Event**

January 21, 2010 more info to come

-2010 National CASA Conference
Atlanta, GA April 16-19 2010
Marriott Atlanta Marquis
Contact Office for more info.

-North Carolina State Fair is Coming
October 15-25, 2009.

Get your tickets early. Visit
www.ncstatefair.org for more information.



PHOTO GALLERY



Above are Newly appointed Vance County GAL: (L to R)

Pam Stevenson, Vanita Henderson, Judge Banks, Alethea Marcellus, Kathy Henderson and Wanda Buchanan

Below are Franklin County Newly Appointed GAL (l. to r.) Judge Baskerville, Dawn McKinney, Cynthia Hayes, Sherry Walsh, Tina Dawson, Kathleen Shefchunas, Trevon Lucas, Tammy Seavert and Queen Queen.



RESOUCE SHARING FROM ONE GAL TO ANOTHER

The Family Support Network is a non-profit organization primarily focused on supporting, educating, and informing families with special needs children, which appears to be a very broad definition. They are interested in expanding their outreach from Wake county into many of the surrounding counties, via establishing twice monthly support group meetings and informational sessions, to provide an opportunity for parents to learn and

to connect with each other. Their web site is <http://www.familysupportonline.com>
Primary Contact: Beth Hutson, 919-560-3000, Beth@familysupportonline.com



Michael Moore, Franklin County GAL, attended a seminar, Parents of Children With Special Needs Support Group and offered the following:

I attended this, along with three parents that had special needs children.

The session was primarily a very interactive lecture provided by Don Neiler, MA, BCBA with ample discussion focused on the specific needs of the children represented by the attending three parents. In essence, a lot of educational information that Don had to offer to them, combined with focused application of tools, and techniques, that the parents might try to apply to their individual situation. It was quite an impressive offering for something billed as simply a "support group" session and little attendance.

I was very impressed with the seminar overall, Mr. Neiler's educational information, and the situation specific attention that was provided to the parents, as well as their ability to share with each other.

Within the Guardian Ad Litem program I see an ongoing need for parental education, information, and support and I'm very excited to see that a community based support-organization has been formed and is attempting to address these needs through that conduit.

We are on the Web
Check out our new site at
www.district9gal.org and find us
on Facebook
District 9 Guardian ad Litem
Volunteers

KNOWING WHO YOU ARE.....

Staff has attended, Knowing Who You Are training that was funded by National CASA. According to Casey Family Programs 2005, the objectives were to

- 1- identify personal and professional assumptions and biases that hinder respect for and value of racial and ethnic differences; begin to challenge and propose strategies for addressing assumptions and biases
- 2 - Engage in courageous conversations that demonstrate staying engaged, speaking our truth, experiencing discomfort and expecting/accepting non-closure
- 3 - Articulate practical opportunities and strategies for incorporating racial and ethnic identity development work into day-to-day practice with youth in care.

The GAL training curriculum touches upon diversity issues in Chapter 3 but this topic needs to be revisited to help us be the best advocates for our youth. Here are some questions (*from Casey Family Programs - 2008*) to ask regarding racial and ethnic identity that can be incorporated into your visits.

Promoting Racial and Ethnic Pride:

What are your family's or community's languages, traditions, customs, foods, stories? How do these help you develop your racial and ethnic identity? What are some of the best things/challenges about being of your race/ethnicity?

Multicultural Competence:

What racial/ethnic groups do you see represented in your community? In your school? In your circle of friends? In your family?

What do you have in common with youth from different racial/ethnic backgrounds other than your own? What differences do you see?

Preparing to Meet Racism and Discrimination:

What do the words racism, stereotype and discrimination mean to you? How do these things affect you?

What kinds of messages have you heard about your own or other racial and ethnic groups? Where do these messages come from?

As your district administrator, I encourage you to incorporate them into your conversations, but not to interrogate your youth. Use them in conversation to understand who it is you represent and what needs to be considered in addressing their needs.

- ITS COLD AND FLU SEASON

- CDC recommends a yearly seasonal flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against seasonal influenza.
 - While there are many different flu viruses, the seasonal flu vaccine protects against the three seasonal viruses that research suggests will be most common.
 - Vaccination is especially important for people at high risk of serious flu complications, including young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.
 - Seasonal flu vaccine also is important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for high risk people to keep from making them sick.
 - A seasonal vaccine will not protect you against 2009 H1N1.
 - A [new vaccine against 2009 H1N1](#) is being made.
 - People at greatest risk for 2009 H1N1 infection include children, pregnant women, and people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease.
Ask your doctor if you should get a 2009 H1N1 vaccine.
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
 - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
 - If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
 - While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other measures to keep our distance from each other to lessen the spread of flu.
- If you get seasonal or 2009 H1N1 flu, antiviral drugs can treat the flu.
 - Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body.
 - The priority use for antiviral drugs this season is to treat people who are very sick (hospitalized) or people who are sick with flu-like symptoms and who are at increased risk of serious flu complications, such as pregnant women, young children, people 65 and older and people with chronic health conditions. (Most people have been able to recover at home from 2009 H1N1 without needing medical care and the same is true of seasonal flu.)
 - Antiviral drugs can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They may also prevent serious flu complications.
 - Antiviral drugs are not sold over-the-counter and are different from antibiotics.
 - For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started within the first 2 days of symptoms.
 - Flu-like symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may also have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, including 2009 H1N1 and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.
- * Visit the CDC [2009 H1N1 website](#) to find out what to do if you get sick with the flu.
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HAVE A HAPPY AND SAFE THANKSGIVING
FROM THE
GAL STAFF

Will You Help a Child?

Speak Up For An Abused or Neglected Child!



Each year, thousands of children in North Carolina are thrust into the court system through no fault of their own. Some are victims of violence, psychological torment, or sexual abuse. Others have been either neglected or abandoned by their own parents. Most of them are frightened and confused. Often these children become re-victimized by an over-burdened child welfare system. A complex legal network of lawyers, social workers, and judges who frequently do not have the time to give thorough detailed attention to each child who comes before them.

The NC Guardian ad Litem Program was created in 1983 under the Administrative Office of the Courts to make sure that the abuse and neglect these children originally suffered was not compounded by the system created to serve them.

A Guardian ad Litem is a trained community advocate who is paired with an attorney advocate to ensure that the child's rights and best interests are before the courts. Ad Litem means "this litigation" or "for this case". The GAL is appointed to represent the child only for the duration of the court's involvement and does not serve as the child's legal guardian. The GAL serves as the child's voice in court. Duties include exploring all facts relevant to the case, making recommendations to the court and monitoring the case so that it will move through the court and Social Services systems without unnecessary delays. The GAL is the only person whose sole task is to focus on the best interest of the child.

Call the Guardian ad Litem Office today.

Share this information with your friends. There are children counting on you.

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