

Count on me to help the children!

check enclosed for ____ Be A Star tickets (\$125.00 each) which include a private Showhouse Tour. Please hold my tickets... I'll attend on June 30th. at Tug Wa Ridge Estate.

Please accept this donation for children's programming at the farm

Please mail my tickets to:

Showcase tickets only please (\$25.00 each) July 1st - 7th



Carpe Diem Farms
544 Western Rhodes Drive
Highlands, NC 28741

Please mark your calendars so that you won't miss out on this important opportunity to support the unique work of the Farm. We've served over 1,000 participants, you can help us serve thousands more. Thanks to all of you who have helped support fifteen years of excellence at Carpe Diem



Seize the Day ...

Carpe Diem Farms News

544 Western Rhodes Drive, Highlands, NC 28741
www.carpediemfarms.org 828.526.2854

Empowering individuals through life changes to see the possibilities and opportunities that abound

Be A Star for A Child has Changed its Date and Venue!

Mark your calendar and plan to attend the 5th annual *Be A Star for a Child* fundraising benefit, Saturday, June 30th at 6:00 PM at the Tug-Wa Estate in Highlands. All proceeds provide after school and summer day camps for the children of Highlands and throughout Macon and Jackson counties with whom we work. More than 1200 children have been served to date. Tickets for the event are \$125 per person. It will be a lovely evening of music, cocktails; great food catered by *Let Holly Do The Cooking*, and private tours of the estate. (Tug-Wa Estate was the former home of our initial benefactor, Frances Shaw whom you read about in the March *Laurel* (article included.) It seems so appropriate to have *Be A Star* at the estate as we celebrate Frances this year as one of the CDF heroes.)

Opportunities come along in life and it is up to us to seize them. Carpe Diem Farms together with four other local non-profits have been selected to be the beneficiaries of the money raised from the magnificent decorator's show house at the Tug-Wa Estate. Blackrock Realty, Cimmeron Homes and Summer House Gallery have magnificently transformed the 1920's estate. You won't want to miss the opportunity to tour it. The show house will be open daily, June 30th through July 8th. Tickets for the show house are \$25 per person. Every \$25 ticket sold by Carpe Diem Farms goes directly back to CDF to support the children's programs. Please call 828.526.2854 or go to our web site www.carpediemfarms.org to reserve yours.

The generosity of Blackrock Realty, Cimmeron Homes and Summer House Gallery by providing this opportunity for Carpe Diem Farms speaks volumes for the individuals involved and their giving spirits. We are most grateful. It is now up to the community, residents and visitors alike to be generous open your hearts, buy tickets for *Be A Star* or tickets for the tour of the estate. Every dollar you spend supports the children we serve. Won't you call 828.526.2854 or visit our web site to order your tickets. It will make your heart sing! For more information about CDF and the programs we offer go to www.carpediemfarms.org



Order your tickets online or mail the coupon on the back of this newsletter

Anniversary Celebration
10 years at C D F
August 19, 2007

**2007 Marks Carpe Diem Farms
Tenth Anniversary**

Happy 2007 from all at Carpe Diem Farms! This year marks the fifteenth anniversary of our foundation and ten years at CDF. Carpe Diem Farms has been driven since its inception in 1992 by a vision to “empower individuals through life changes to see the opportunities and possibilities that abound.” In a safe environment, surrounded by nature and our caring herd of nine horses—the equine staff and colleagues—participants learn to overcome fears and fulfill lifelong dreams. Over the past fifteen years, we have served over 1,200 participants, ages 3-82! Wow: that’s something to celebrate!

**Gar’s Kids Camp
The NEW Apprentice Program
June 18-22**

New in 2007, we are offering a special week of camp for older kids interested in learning more about horse behavior, training, and care. This intensive week-long program will be offered to participants ages 12-15. Our apprentices will learn to lead the horses through lessons using the natural approach to riding, developing a deep and meaningful relationship with the horses. Apprentices will learn the ins-and-outs of the daily barn routine, from preparing natural feed for each of the nine horses, to mucking stalls, to caring for and learning about the different types of tack and equipment. Our apprentices will also be introduced to the basics of T-Touch and equine massage, an important part of the horse-rider connection. This is the first year of this exciting new program limited to five participants; make sure that your child is the first to participate!



**Gar’s Kids Camp
An Experiential Adventure
July 9-13**

We are offering a week of camp for boys and girls ages 6-11. Working in partnership with the equine staff, participants establish a deeper sense of connection, with themselves, with others, and with nature. Like every program offered at the farm, Gar’s Kids Camp emphasizes, mental, emotional and physical harmony between horse and rider. Camp would not be complete without our amazing arts and crafts and nature components. You won’t want your child to miss out. Learning about leadership and responsibility while having fun, that’s what Gar’s Kids is all about!

**Celebrating our Anniversary
A Sunday of Events at Carpe Diem Farms**

Come celebrate our 10th anniversary of being on the farm. Sunday, August 19, 11-4, come out and tour the farm, eat good food, listen to the music of award winning musicians Richard Shulman and Thea and The Green Man, and enjoy a horse demonstration in the new Experiential Riding Arena! Come and see our magical horses in motion. Visit our website www.carpediemfarms.org or call 828-526-2854 to learn about these events and other programs offered at the Farm.

**“In the Company of Horses...
Learning Their Language”
Level I returns by popular demand
September 14-16**

**“In the Company of Horses...
The Journey Continues”
Level II will be held
October 19-21**

Did your new year’s resolutions include personal growth and development, nurturing yourself, expanding your horizons, fulfilling lifelong dreams or desires, overcoming fears, improving your communication skills, or enhancing your relationships? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions you’ll want to register immediately for “In the Company of Horses — Learning Their Language.”



If you have read the book or watched the movie, The Horse Whisperer, loved My Friend Flicka, Black Beauty, The Black Stallion or Spirit; read the Tao of Equus, The Faraway Horse or perhaps Talking with Horses and wanted to know more and fear less — this weekend experiential adventure is for you. As part of the life enrichment programs at CDF — creating a more meaningful life and again making living an art form. “In the Company of Horses — Learning Their Language” participants will re-establish a true and deep connection with nature through horses.

The ancients called horses the messengers between ourselves and the divine, companions to the gods. Come and experience for yourself the magic and miracles of the equine.

Adopt a Horse

share the love

Their care costs over \$35,000/year (\$5,380/horse.) Our Adopt-A-Horse program, which covers daily care, farrier, vet bills, food, hay, supplements, vitamins, grooming supplies and training costs, offers a unique opportunity to provide the joy of horsemanship to many. We are looking for individuals or groups to become adoptive families for our horses. Sign up now— join with others and pay a portion or pay it all, either way, your name or the name of your choice will be posted on “your” horse’s stall as a supporter. You will receive an adoption certificate, pictures of your horse, and frequent updates. Of course, we encourage you to schedule a time to come by and visit your new friend! By adopting a horse, you will touch not only the lives of these amazing equines, but also every participant who walks through the gate.



Contributors to the Leo Blair Memorial Building Fund

We are most grateful for your generosity

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Heroes of Carpe Diem

Celebrating Those Who Have Made Carpe Diem Farms a Reality

We begin with Frances King Shaw without whom we would still be raising money to close on the purchase of the farm! After five years of searching and attempting to buy the perfect spot for CDF we found it. We negotiated an amazing contract on forty-four acres with four buildings (needing major repair or bulldozing), a waterfall, two streams, flat pasture land and most important, surrounded by National Forest with endless trails. With no money in the bank for an earnest money deposit Frances donated a check to accompany the contract to purchase. Accepted June 15, 1997 we had two months until closing to raise \$75,000. A monumental task! By August 1, we had \$25,000 in the bank and were \$50,000 short of our goal. Our initial CDF board, Judy Brinson, Frances, Charlotte Keyt and I met to brainstorm. After lunch, Frances spoke and I will never forget the moment, the look on her face, her determination, she said, "I am



going to write a check here and now for \$50,000 so we can get on with the business of creating CDF, the place. We have important work to do to help others and we can't do that if we continue to worry about getting this money."

Every step we took Frances led the way. Later she donated our signature tipi and outdoor stage in celebration of Charlotte Keyt. Her time at CDF, with children, the horses, the board and the place brought her great joy. She inspired us all. She set the bar for future donors, volunteers and board members. She left this earth plane on March 2, 2005. We miss her physical presence and counsel and all know that her spirit walks with us daily cheering our growth and development. With gratitude and love we thank you, dear Frances.

The next heroes to step up to the plate at CDF were Gary and Leo Blair (my brother and father.) Leo, like he had done my whole life, showed up for the dedication weekend, participated fully and signed on to help. On the other end of the spectrum, Gary said "many are called and few are chosen." He believed that CDF and I were chosen to make a difference and he said he had to help all he could.



Together they joined forces, a formidable duo, and for seven months disassembled a warehouse and reassembled it into our beautiful stables. We

moved the horses in Thanksgiving weekend 1998. 1999 and 2000 brought a multitude of projects to Gary and Leo's plates. They continued their tireless efforts. When Gary left for the season little did we know that he would never return. He was killed in an auto accident in November of 2000. At his funeral his friends committed to come and help and "Gary's Boot Camps" began. Leo led the troops of unskilled volunteers who painted the stables, the out barn *The Lodge* and the pump house. The next year they returned and painted the exterior of "Dead Eye's Barn." The following year we did it again. Because of Gary's memory, his friends and Leo's guidance we transformed Dead Eye's Barn into a magnificent conference center complete with a commercial kitchen, modern bathrooms, storage and much more. The last year of Boot Camp transformed The Lodge into its present state providing three more bedrooms and baths for housing our multitude of participants for workshops and seminars. You cannot walk the land or visit any building without seeing and feeling the work of Leo and Gary Blair. They have and will remain the guiding construction forces of Carpe Diem Farms. We will always be grateful for their gifts.

From you I have learned that life is good to those who look for the good in others, life is generous to those who give, and life is ageless to those who live with gratitude and enthusiasm. If anyone deserves to be celebrated, it is you — Dad.

Following are excerpts from my remembrances of Leo A. Blair, my father, which I delivered at his funeral mass March 31, 2007.

Leo Albert Blair
May 8, 1928 – March 26, 2007

My belief system tells me that when we are about to be born into a lifetime that we choose our parents. We choose them for the lessons we have to learn and those we have to teach. Little did I know that when I chose my parents that I would be so blessed.

Dad was more than a man among men. He was a man who in my entire lifetime I never heard anyone make a negative comment about — it was more — don't we wish we could be more like him.

The middle child of 7 siblings — his family endearingly called him "Little Cus" one brother always called him Mose — He was for me Leo Blair, my father, my mentor, my biggest supporter and hero. He was the one who taught me those intangible life lessons. He taught me strength of character, perseverance, stick-to-it-ness... he taught me gentleness, understanding, compassion. He taught me the great joy in giving without recognition. Without ever saying it he taught me to check my ego at the door. He always went beyond anyone's expectation and taught me to do the same. He demanded the best in him and through his example taught me. He shared everything — time, talent and treasures. He was always first to pick up the check! He wanted everyone to live their BEST lives — whatever that meant to them and he would support them in their efforts. I believe that my father lived a life of few regrets. I'm really not sure how to exist in a world where my Dad doesn't... he's giving me the opportunity to learn that lesson too.

How do you begin to say good-bye to the person you measure everyone against, the person you never want to disappoint, the person you want to make proud the person who supported you in every endeavor of your life — who showed up at every event, sold the tickets, built the sets, cooked the hamburgers, drove endless miles to attend, donate time, talent and money to make my dreams come true.

As a small child Dad would take me to work with him on Saturdays. Until I entered school I believed that my name was "Susan Marie Blair Construction Company," and secretly today it still is. Little did I know then the skills of the trade my father would teach me these last 10 years as we built Carpe Diem Farms together.

I feel safe in saying that Dad taught everyone he met responsibility — to ourselves, our community, our family. He taught us how to be generous with our time, our talents, our gifts and our good fortune. He taught us the importance of honoring our fellowman, volunteering to make the world a better place. He led by his example, not his words. He was never boastful or vain. His success in life was being an honorable man.

He would give you the shirt off his back if you needed it and he never looked for thanks — or praise — he received his rewards in the act of giving. I must admit that at times it was challenging to live up to him — he set the bar high by his example. When others were too busy to help he always made time. He coached my brothers little league team even though he himself didn't play the

game. He helped to mold the lives of those young men through his encouragement — everyone on his team played no matter their skills because that's how you teach young people how to stretch the reality of themselves. It is what I do my best to exemplify.

He bought me a horse as a child, not because he could afford it — he told me that buying it was just the down payment — he had ulterior motives — to teach me responsibility and to keep me off the beach and away from boys — it worked and today my life has had 14 horses in it and 9 presently. That original gift has been my souls' connection for all these years and defines who I am today. I believe that if there is one thing my father really "got" about me was and is my connection to the animals, the land and nature.

From my earliest beginnings he always said "You can do and be anything you want in life." He didn't have different rules for girls and boys — everyone he believed needed to strive to be their personal best. I know too that there has never been anyone in my life whom I have experienced who has empowered so many. He knew not a stranger, embraced each of our hopes and dreams, gave us a sense of belonging and taught us by example how to love life.

One of his greatest teachings was never to say an unkind word about anyone. He'd tell me to always look for the good in others, he'd say sometimes you have to look really hard but it's our job to bring out the best in others. It's a hard lesson, one that I'm still learning.

He grew to love Carpe Diem Farms, my life's mission and the place where my soul sings. When my brother Gary took it on to help me Dad took the opportunity to spend more time with him — together they worked endless hours rebuilding their relationship and the place. When Gary died I believe that Dad became more involved with manifesting my dream because he felt a connection

to Gary on the land, in the place. It is my belief that Gary nudged him on every step of the way. Four years of Gary's Boot Camps made an amazing difference in the place and more in the lives of all who volunteered to be a part of the team. We caulked and painted, hammered and nailed, laid endless tile, hung 9,000 square feet of sheetrock, built addition, transformed spaces and through it all he never made any of his rookie workers, mostly girls, none of whom had ever worked construction feel less than. He taught us life skills way beyond the tasks.

I feel blessed and full of gratitude that Leo Blair is my father. Thank you Dad for the hope, strength, courage and trust you gave me and the comfort you provided from the storms of my life. You gave me the ability to be my best self. I love you Dad, Namaste. Go in peace.

