

Blind photographer sees the big picture

By **Eve Greene**
Carrboro Commons
Photo Editor

Georg Gordon's personal goal is to photograph every home basketball game this season at Carrboro High School. This may not seem like a remarkably ambitious goal — except that Gordon is legally blind.

After multiple surgeries to correct developing macular holes, cataracts and the loss of pigment in his retinas, Gordon's impairment forced him to retire from his career as writer, photographer and editor. Fortunately, for the town of Carrboro, even the loss of his sight couldn't stop him from doing what he loves.

"Digital [photography] has saved my life," said Gordon. He knows the range of his camera and with help from the bold lines running the length of the court, he knows where to expect action.

Kirk Ross, editor of *The Carrboro Citizen*, for which Gordon freelances, said "the joy of autofocus" has kept Gordon in the field. "He really gets some great shots," said Ross.

In August of last year, Gordon moved to Carrboro, to just down the street from Carrboro High School. Needing something to fill his free time, he began to attend the home basketball games and take pictures. That's when *The Carrboro Citizen* entered the picture.

Ross said Gordon just wanted to help, and offered his services to *The Carrboro Citizen* for free. When Gordon sent him some pictures in an email, Ross wrote, "I was really happy to see someone interested in regularly documenting the teams' first seasons."

Journalism isn't about the money, Gordon explained. "When I have a kid come up to me, just totally overjoyed that his picture is in the paper, I mean, that just warms my heart."

Gordon has had to adapt as his eyesight continues to slip away. Using a magnifying glass, he can still edit pictures from his computer. Although he can take simple notes of jersey numbers, he often uses a tape recorder to keep more detailed records. Gordon is able to walk to and from the school for games, but parents and Ross often willingly offer rides when they see him along the road.

After years of building his portfolio by writing and photographing as a freelancer — "with emphasis on the free," said Gordon with a smile — he offered his services to a small newspaper in Thomasville, Ala., in 1996, beginning his third career. Born in Canada, Gordon was an office machine mechanic and an over-the-road truck driver before he was drawn to journalism.



Photo by Eve Greene

Photographer Georg Gordon stands ready with his camera during a triple-header on Jan. 25 at Carrboro High School. Walking the baseline, the experienced photographer is keeping his goal of shooting every home basketball game for the Jaguars. You can see his work weekly in *The Carrboro Citizen*.

Soon, he was providing 90 percent of the material for the weekly newspaper. After four months, the editor left and Gordon was offered the vacant position. *The Thomasville News* quickly consumed Gordon's life.

Gordon successfully ran the paper for more than nine years and became so involved that he was often forced to spend the night on a cot in the office. "My address where I was registered to vote was the newspaper office," Gordon chuckled.

Throughout the years he spent editing stories for the paper, he constantly sought out intriguing stories. He was once threatened with jail time for requesting public records and engaged in a political campaign, challenging the incumbent mayor.

In competing with *The Thomasville Times*, the established paper in the area, Gordon proved his determination by covering not only Thomasville but the surrounding counties as well. When funding dried up within the town because of pressure from the mayor, *The Thomasville News* found advertisers from outside the town.

"I knew nobody else was going to do what I could do," said Gordon of his paper's coverage of the broad area.

Even now, with the chronic decline of his eyesight, Gordon continues to write for three newspapers in Alabama. He writes on anything and everything, remaining hard-hitting and dedicated to the improvement of the towns his articles reach. "A fellow newsman told me," Gordon said, "the duty of a newspaper man is to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comforted."

Gordon says he is even using his journalism experience here to help those at home. He hopes to take his work back and prove to the state of Alabama that even blindness can't keep him from his photography and reporting. Gordon will be using his pictures and articles to push for improvements in vocational rehabilitation programs.

Ross wrote in an email, "I'd never thought about the fact that a person with his knack and experience might through the aid of technology be able to continue doing what he loves doing."

When Gordon does return to Alabama in February, it's not just the pictures that the town will miss. It's the khaki-vested gentleman moving along the baseline with his camera and press pass proving that he can't be slowed down, even by blindness.

Eve Greene is a UNC-CH student writing for the Carrboro Commons, the bi-weekly online lab newspaper for Carrboro produced by Jock Lauterer's Community Journalism class at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.



PHOTO BY GEORG T. GORDON

Brad Dimac (10) of the Carrboro Jaguar varsity drives through the defense of the Durham School of the Arts during the Wednesday, Jan. 30 game in Carrboro.



PHOTO BY GEORG T. GORDON

Liz Holman (10) of the Carrboro Lady Jaguars varsity ignores a horde of Lady Bulldogs and takes her shot during the Wednesday, Jan. 30 game against the Durham School of the Arts.

Coaches' ★ Reports

Carrboro High Swimming and Diving

(via Carrboro High website)

Our Swimmers & Divers competed in the 1A/2A state meet this past weekend. The competition was tough, with over 700 student-athletes representing 76 of the 89 1A/2A schools in North Carolina. Our Jaguar Swimmers & Divers stepped up to the competition and finished our first season with a bang. Both the men's and women's swim teams placed 3rd over all. The men scored a total of 168 points and the women finished with 151 points.

We had a number of incred-

ible races in both individual and relay events. In the Prelims session, there were 26 new best times and we had 16 swimmers qualify for Finals.

Congratulations to Emily Tysinger and Ken Ryan who each received special awards from the NCHSAA.

Emily Tysinger: 2007/2008 Mid-State Conference Women's Swimmer of the Year

Ken Ryan: 2007/2008 State Meet Men's MVP

Results for Cougar Divers were outstanding. Carrboro Diving results below:

Men's results (diving):
3rd place: Colby Isabel, 4th place: Hayden Stults, 5th place: JJ Strosnyder, 6th place: MacKenzie Price.

Women's results (diving):
3rd place: Sarah Hubbard, 4th place: Emily Johnston.

Scoreboard

CARRBORO HIGH MEN'S BASKETBALL

Friday, January 30
(via Georg T. Gordon)
Car: 16 17 18 17 = 68
DSA: 11 8 20 22 = 61
David Brooks topped the scoring for Carrboro with 25 points. Brad Dimac contributed 17 points, including two 3-point baskets, for the Jaguars.

CARRBORO HIGH WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Friday, January 30
(via Georg T. Gordon)
Car: 7 8 9 21 = 45
DSA: 11 13 12 11 = 47
Layne Mishoe led the Carrboro scoring with 12 points on two 3-point buckets and three 2-point baskets. Kelly Brown had eight points. Omni Lester contributed six points on two 2-point baskets and two free throws.

Next games for the UNC Tar Heels:
Men: Vs Clemson at home. Feb 10, 6:30 p.m. (On FSN)
Women: Vs Clemson at home. Feb 7, 7 p.m.

ADVERTISING INDEX

The ArtsCenter, 7
Aussie Pet Mobile, 10
The Beehive, 5
Blunden Studio, 10
Carrboro Family Vision, 5
Carrboro Recreation & Parks, 7
Cat's Cradle, 2
Cliff's Meat Market, 8
Community Dinner, 3
Duke Center for Nicotine & Smoking Cessation Research, 4
Epting & Hackney, 7
Franklin Street Auto, 3
Glass Half Full, 5
Hillsborough Yarn Shop, 3
Cliff Larsen, 7
Lantern, 5
Laskody Law Office, 5
Pat Neagle, 8
Orange Community Housing & Land Trust, 8
Peck and Artisans, 3
Mark Rhoades, 7
Dan Ryon, 5
Southern Rail, 3
3 Cups, 75
Three Treasure Acupuncture, 7
Triangle Swing Dance, 10
True Craftsmen, 8
The UPS Store, 3
WCOM, 4
Walker Brown, 4
Weaver Street Realty, 2

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

8			6				2
	7			2	5		3
		2		9		8	
	5		7			4	
1		6		8		3	
		7		4			1
		3		7	6		4
9					8	6	
	6		1				5

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★ ★ ★

★ Moderate ★ ★ Challenging
★ ★ ★ HOO BOY!

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SUPER CROSSWORD WHIRLED TOUR

ACROSS
1 Hollywood clasher
5 Out of line
10 Falindromic Parsigian
13 Haarlem export
18 '78 Bujold thriller
19 Lavished
21 Waggle
22 Meyerbeer masterpiece
23 West Indian trouble-maker?
25 Mideastern show tune?
27 Aquatic animal
28 Appraise
30 Compass pt.
31 Vacation sensation
34 Citrus fruit
35 Brand or Chamberlain
38 Thames town
41 Son of Noah
43 Touch down
45 "— Dinah" ("58 hit)
46 Opening
47 — acid
49 One — customer
51 Gambols
54 Speechless, in South-east Asia?
59 Church members
61 Hold up
62 Pro bono
63 Summer quencher
64 Gawk
65 Israeli dance
68 TV's "— Life"
70 Brenda or Brandon
72 "Unforgettable" name
73 South American designer?
76 Scandinavian sugar substitute?
80 Muir or Miniver
81 By means of
82 Nobelist
84 — gin fizz
85 Gam and Wilson
88 Exec's deg.
90 Concept
92 Pointless
96 Adult insect
97 Central American song?
101 Adidis —
103 Rock's —
104 Ointment
105 Ornamental vine
106 Whip, for one
108 Family members,
to many
112 Perplexed
113 Artist
116 Vincent
118 Haul
120 Impresario
121 Self-
123 Biblical kingdom
127 Caribbean entree?
130 African palanquins?
134 Where the buoys are
135 Fr. holy woman
136 Beethoven symphony
137 Ginger cookie
138 Swelling
139 Aunt or niece
140 Bestow
141 "Guarding —"
(94 film)
DOWN
1 Narcissus' nymph
2 Big kid?
3 Fail to mention
4 Glossy cloth
5 Garment part
6 — Paulo,
Brazil
7 Relatives
8 Actress
9 Georgia
9 Plant pest
10 Hunt's "— Ben Adhem"
11 Director
12 Let up
13 Anderson's "High —"
14 News org.
15 Raze
16 Musical of 1919
17 Unwind a rind
20 Stage stuff
24 Levin or Remsen
26 Extremely infrequently?
29 Slowly, to Sibellius
32 Dispel
33 Head set?
36 Sacred cows
37 Paul of "The Burning Bed"
38 "Heavens to Betsy!"
39 "Little Man —" ('91 film)
40 Fall birthstone
42 Irritate
44 Mrs. David Copperfield
47 "Blue —" ('77 hit)
48 It's walked at Windsor
50 Baffle
52 Nero's instrument
53 Scarecrow
55 Bolger/Haley co-star
56 Singer Della
57 Moisture
58 Starts a lawn
60 Still
66 Gun the engine
67 Out on —
69 Stage whisper
71 Sushi candidate
73 — donna
74 Cornerstone abbr.
75 Tag
77 Literary parson
78 Din
79 Easter ends it
80 Med. test
83 Taylor or Trotta
86 "F Troop" corporal
87 Edna Ferber novel
89 Crooked
91 Spirited steed
93 Baudelaire's buddies
94 Church area
95 "Orinoco Flow" singer
98 Grenoble's river
99 Beseeched
100 Done
102 Take on
107 Way out
109 On edge
110 Anchored
112 Taken way
113 Endorse, with "for"
114 "The Sandbox" playwright
115 Wasteland
117 Enticed
119 Timber tree
120 Sailboat, e.g.
122 — Ball (arcade game)
124 Mozart's "— kleine Nachtmusik"
125 Some underwear
126 Snake charmer's crew
128 Bond rating
129 NBC comedy showcase
131 Support
132 Sgt. or cpl.
133 Cornfield cry

