

Dream Come True

By Elizabeth Loftin

Shackleford Island pony photographer helps her childhood friend battle cancer

I was eight years old the first time I met Carol in the '60s. She was a tall, beautiful girl with dark hair and blue eyes, leading a snow white mare named Shady Lady. I kept watching Shady grow and grow until one day I announced to Carol, "Shady Lady is going to have a baby."

"Awh," said Carol. "Shady's not going to have a baby; she's just bigger than your pony."

"Nope, she's gonna have a foal," I repeated. Carol just grinned.

A few months passed and sure 'nuff, here comes Carol running up the dirt road to our house in Beaufort as fast as her long legs could carry her. She hit our back porch out of breath and exclaimed, "Shady Lady's had a baby, Shady's had a baby!"

I grinned from ear to ear and said, "I told ya so!"

That day, a dream was born in the shape of a tiny appaloosa named Surprise Package. A lot of time has passed since then. My friend Carol and I have grown up. We've had our own children and have owned many horses since Shady Lady and Surprise. But one thing that's never changed is Carol's dream of owning an appaloosa farm. A few years back, Carol and her husband

Larry (they are members of Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative) made their wishes into realities with their "Dream Come True Appaloosa Farm."

Sounds like a fairy tale come to life, right? So why is it that sometimes, just when you get to the top, something comes along to knock you down? In May 2003, Carol began having terrible headaches. It turned out that she had a large, malignant tumor in her head. Unfortunately, even after surgery, some of the tumor remained, requiring this aggressive form of cancer to be treated with chemo and radiation.



Purchase a "Shady's Surprise" print to help Carol Garner battle cancer.

With hardships facing the couple, there has been talk of selling the farm, and even the horses. But I'm not convinced that selling is the answer.

Going through Carol's and Larry's photo albums, I found a print of "Shady Lady and Surprise," taken the morning of Surprise's birth. The moment I saw it, the idea came to me to offer this print for sale to the public, with proceeds benefiting Larry and Carol Garner in their time of need.

Let's help Carol and Larry keep their farm! Let's help with the stress of medical bills so that she can recover and enjoy her dream come true once more.

Purchase a print to help a "Dream Come True"

Order an 8" x 10" print for \$35 or an 11" x 14" for \$50 (see example above). Prints are signed by the photographer, Carol Garner. All proceeds go to the "Carol Garner Trust Fund." Purchase includes a thank-you note, free additional 8" x 10" print of wild Shackleford ponies, and a copy of Carol's story. Send check or money order to 2371 Lennoxville Rd., Beaufort, NC 28516. Make checks payable to "Carol Garner Trust Fund." You can also contact Larry Garner at (252) 725-2627 or Elizabeth Loftin at (252) 728-4701.

Elizabeth Loftin is an Outer Banks native best known for her photographs of Shackleford Island's wild ponies. She has been an advocate of the ponies for years, founding Friends of the Wild Mustangs to make public the protection of the wild horses. The Shackleford Foundation eventually took on this role of overseeing the horses in conjunction with the National Park Service. View her photography (below) at www.elizabethswildhorses.com.

