



**CASA**

Court Appointed Special Advocates  
**FOR CHILDREN**

**DENTON COUNTY**

The mission of CASA of Denton County, Inc. is to provide trained community volunteers, to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children, and to promote community awareness about child abuse issues.

FALL 2014



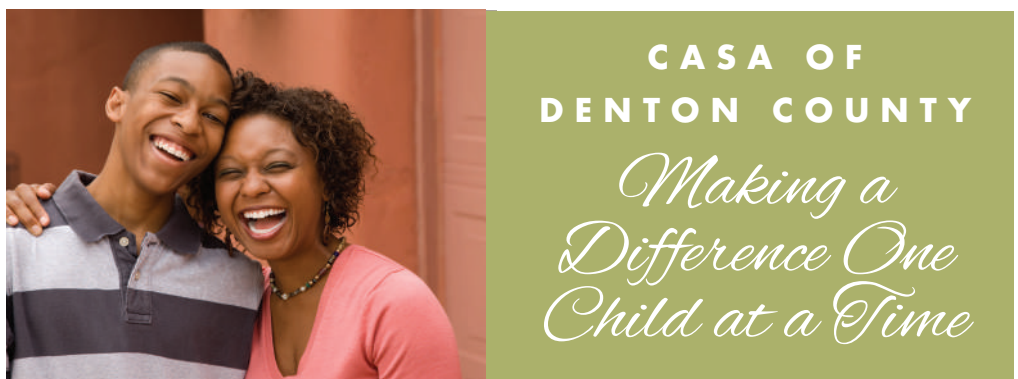
**EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR'S  
MESSAGE**



Do you believe in the right of every human being to live in a safe environment? One free of abuse, violence and oppression. At CASA of Denton County – we believe just that. And further, we believe that every child has a right to feel safe, loved and cared for. To be treated as human beings, not possessions. To thrive. In our society, the stewardship of a child's rights rest primarily with family. When – for whatever reason – a family is unable to live up to those obligations, a child is left to a system. A system that is full of wonderful and caring people, but is ill-equipped to handle both the volume and complexity of the cases – one every two minutes – that enter the system. That is why CASA exists. So a qualified, responsible adult has each child's back at the most vulnerable and consequential time in that child's life. So somebody will fight for that child's rights – while in the foster care system – and well beyond.

2014 has been an exceptionally busy year for CASA of Denton County. We added an additional full time casework supervisor position in January and a part time receptionist to help balance the workload. This better positions CASA to serve more children in need and brings us closer to our vision of a CASA for every abused or neglected child in our local child welfare system. CASA staff, volunteers and board members have increased volunteer recruitment efforts and this Fall we are embarking on an intense media recruitment campaign. All this to increase the number of volunteer child advocates and bring us

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**CASA OF  
DENTON COUNTY**

*Making a  
Difference One  
Child at a Time*

Michael is a handsome teenager with curly dark hair and piercing blue eyes. He has a smile that warms your heart and he loves to talk. He is very bright and learns easily, yet his life has not been easy.

At the age of five, Michael was adopted shortly after his biological parents' rights were terminated. In 2010, a report was received by Child Protective Services (CPS) alleging physical abuse of Michael and his sister by his adoptive parents. Michael, then 12, was seen running around the neighborhood in his pajamas with leg restraints around his ankles. During the course of the investigation, Michael and his sister were dropped off by their adoptive mother in the parking lot of CPS with a note stating the children were no longer wanted. Shortly thereafter, the adoptive parents relinquished their parental rights to the children.

Since Michael was placed in foster care the second time, he has been in three foster homes, two emergency shelters, and a psychiatric hospital. He has lost the ability to trust others and developed serious behavior problems that prevent him from living in a home. In October 2012, Michael was placed in a residential treatment center (RTC) where he was to be provided with intense counseling, psychiatric services, structure, and other services to help him become stable and able to live in a home environment.

In December 2012, a CASA volunteer named Tom was appointed to Michael's case. Even though Michael did not trust anyone and did not want to communicate with his CASA volunteer, Tom was not discouraged! He learned about Michael's past and read his CPS history. He visited the RTC and talked with staff on multiple occasions. He attended psychiatric appointments, treatment team meetings, reviewed counseling notes, and examined school records. At the same time, Tom spent a significant amount of time getting to know Michael. Trust was built slowly, and Tom began to identify serious concerns for his CASA child. He was in a charter school that Tom described as a "dump" and his grades were in the "trash." Michael was without sufficient or appropriate clothes. He went without haircuts and did not have appropriate grooming tools or skills. Michael had no social interaction and, in fact, lacked social skills. He was not a part of any groups, and mainly sat alone playing video games. Michael had an explosive temper and without thought would be in altercations with boys and staff at the RTC. He became so unhappy he ran away trying to escape the hell he was living in.

For all of these reasons, and more, Tom strongly advocated for Michael to be moved to an RTC that would better meet his needs. He researched options for his CASA child and even drove 600 miles

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## Welcome Graduates of Winter Advocacy Academy

CASA had a terrific class of new advocates and one new staff member who graduated in March.

Pictured, back row, left to right are: Vera McBride, Lindsay Barnes, Darlene Covich, Sheri Wilson, Ken Schwartz, the Honorable Judge Margaret Barnes; front row, left to right are: Philly Journagan, Angela Byers, Cassandra Van Winkle, Amina Malik. Not pictured: Ellen Wood.



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

*closer to our vision of a CASA for every child. You can join the efforts by sharing the CASA story with your family, friends, neighbors, church friends, co-workers and others in the community.*

*We not only invite you to share our story but to become a part of it. You can volunteer to help children and families, you can volunteer for events, you can volunteer in the office and you can share resources and support. It takes all of these efforts and often more to meet the needs of the children we serve. You can play a role in changing a child's life – we invite you to do just that!*

*Sherri Gideon*

## Welcome Graduates of Summer Advocacy Academy

CASA had a wonderful class of new advocates who graduated in July.

Pictured, back row, left to right are: Scott Ridgway, James Beavers, Christina Brown, Shelia Julian, Marissa Valtierra, Julie Geldert and Aaron Robb; front row, left to right are: Nicole Luttrell, Lynette Beavers, Franki Saldivar, Lelia Stone, and Laura Colgan-Nelson. Not pictured: Diana Kalinowska.



## Making a Difference One Child at a Time

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to check out an RTC in person and then made a recommendation to the court that Michael be moved. This did happen for Michael and the move has been successful – on many levels. Today, Michael is a different child. He is making good grades and for the first time making friends. Although he still has a quick temper, he has not been in any physical altercations since moving. All of his needs are being met, and he does not look like the same child. He is growing tall, and he no longer has a look of being lost in his eyes. He has seen that someone cares about him and is learning to trust again - all because of Tom. Michael has never been able to express his feelings for another person, other than his sister, since this case began. However, as Tom was getting ready to leave his last visit, Michael reached out to him and told him that he loved him. Tom is truly making a difference in the life of his CASA child.

# GIFTS FROM THE HEART:

Heartfelt thanks to donors who made contributions to CASA between December 1, 2013 and July 31, 2014.

## MAJOR FUNDING SOURCES

- Capital for Kids Foundation
- City of Carrollton
- City of Denton
- City of Frisco
- City of Highland Village
- City of Lewisville
- Cloud 9 Charities
- Denton Benefit League
- Denton County Commissioner's Court
- Flower Mound Rotary Club
- Johnson Family Foundation
- Kiwanis Club of Southern Denton County
- Office of the Attorney General
- Texas Bar Foundation
- Texas CASA, Inc.
- Town of Flower Mound
- United Way of Denton County, Inc.
- United Way of Metropolitan Dallas
- Victim of Crime Act

## 16TH ANNUAL EVENING OF ELEGANCE EVENT (AS OF 7/31/14)

- **DIAMOND SPONSOR**  
DATCU Credit Union
- **RUBY SPONSOR**  
TXU Energy
- **EMERALD SPONSOR**  
Denton Regional Medical Center

## DONATIONS TO HELP MEET CASA'S

**GREATEST NEEDS (Monetary, In-Kind & through Workplace Campaigns)** CASA strives to remember all of those who have blessed us. Please notify us and forgive us if we failed to list your name and know that your generosity is deeply appreciated and truly helps us make a difference for children.

- Nancy Acee
- Rhonda Acker
- Active Network, Inc.
- Adams Exterminating Company, Inc.
- Judy Agee
- Johnnie Akin
- Scott Alagood
- Scotty Albis
- Sarah Alyea
- Amazon Smile Foundation
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- Boy Scouts of America, Employees of
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- Ron and Melanie Brisette
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- Sam Burke
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- Charlotte Browning
- Lawrence Bunyard and Heather Paton
- Jean Burk
- John Burke
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- Christina Bynum
- Kenneth Cadenhead
- Jean Callahan
- Steve and Andrea Calloway
- Chris Calma
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- Leon and Jean Campbell
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- Justin Claunch
- Cloud 9 Salon and Spa
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- Charles Cram
- Crazy Daisy Lawn & Landscape
- Robert Crews
- Ray and Susan Croff
- Steven Cross
- Cross Timbers Gazette
- Rick Daniel

Thank You

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RECEIVED GIFTS IN HONOR OF...**

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- Dan Coffee  
From Bryan Rice
- Charla Connor  
From Bryan Rice
- Chad Elsey  
From Bryan Rice
- Chuck Elsey  
From Bryan Rice
- Ciera Bank  
From Data Facts, Inc.
- Steve Kuzmich  
From Scott McDearmont
- Ernestine Lewis  
From L. Dee and Sherry Shipman
- Brandon Martino  
From Angela Matthews  
From Employees of The Martino Group
- Betty Moran  
Mr. and Mrs. James Moran  
Ed and Lisa Petro
- Andrew Passons  
From Bryan Rice
- Amie Peace  
From Bryan Rice
- Pamela Poteet  
From Charles and Barbara Lee
- Lee Ramsey  
From Angela Matthews  
From Employees of The Martino Group
- Kelli Stoops  
From Andrea Edwards
- Theresa White  
From Betty White

**CASA IS PLEASED TO HAVE  
RECEIVED GIFTS IN MEMORY OF...**

- Kathryn Kirk Bell  
From Michael and Betty Moran
- Bernadine Brown  
From Michael and Betty Moran
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From Betty Calaway  
From Claud Calaway  
From Claudette Calaway  
From Loretta Jagers  
From Arquilla Shepherd  
From Dorothy Wills
- Shelby Hiser  
From Terri Ford
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- Grace Mansfield  
From Robin O'Connell
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From Arquilla Shepherd
- From Dorothy Wills  
From Ellis Wills, Jr.
- Edna Stevens Paikowski  
From David and Brenda Sweeten
- Bob St. Pierre  
From Michael and Betty Moran
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From Michael and Betty Moran

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- Russ and Becky Kerbow
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- Buster Kirkland
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- Ron and Linda Krause
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- Gary Krueger
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- Penny Kuhnmuench
- Steve Kuzmich
- Ricky Kyle
- Employees of Labinal, Inc.
- Land O'Lakes Quilt Guild, Inc.
- Amy Lankford
- Robyn Larabee
- Kevin and Brenda Latham
- Lantana Ladies League
- Jeffery Lawrence
- Charles and Barbara Lee
- Deborah Leliaert
- Vince Leon
- Lewisville Noon Rotary Club
- Jim Lillis
- Jeff Lindemann
- Tracy Lindsay
- Links Construction
- Mary Logan
- Lone Star Ag Credit
- Amy Lord-Goodwin
- John and Rhonda Loving
- Martin Lucas

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- Cora Ann Martin
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- Mike and Marian Martin
- Brandon Martino
- Martino Group, Employees of
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- Randall Womack
- Women of Flower Mound
- Terry Wood
- Workforce Solutions North Central Texas
- Eugene Wright
- Laura Zimmel
- Jason Zorola

## Kudos Corner

*CCASCA* was blessed during the holiday season in 2013 to get donations for children served by CASA from employees of the Boy Scouts of America National Council offices, members of the Land O'Lakes Quilt Guild, the Kiwanis Club of Southern Denton County, the Bridlewood Mom's Group, employees of Medical Center of Lewisville, the Krum Lions Club, members of Senator Jane Nelson's staff, a local 4-H club and the University of North Texas PUSH organization. Nineteen individuals and eight groups "adopted" specific children to provide gifts for the holiday, seventeen people donated more than 40 hours to provide gift wrapping, two groups made handmade quilts and stockings for the children and more than 40 CASA staff and volunteers delivered gifts to 90 children served by CASA of Denton County. Blessings were bountiful indeed!

*Special thanks* to Paul and Pat Shell of Budget Blinds for their generous donation of mini-blinds to the CASA office. The CASA Administration Office was renovated in 2012/2013. During the renovation, a few sets of blinds became unusable due to windows changing and then in summer 2013, some of the original blinds just simply fell down and fell apart. Paul and Pat came to the rescue – we couldn't be more grateful!

*Members* of the Lantana Ladies League are on it! Annually, they select some groups to assist and CASA benefited from their giving program! They contributed



copy paper for the office and gift cards for CASA kids. Many thanks to all members of the League for Caring for our CASA Kids!

*Hats off* to the members of Women of Flower Mound for helping CASA youth and teens. They "adopted" CASA in February this year and provided items for teens too numerous to count including clothes, games, personal care items, gift cards and much, much more. Some members later made additional personal contributions and some have started volunteering. Thank you for making a difference!

*Many thanks* to Friends of Rachael in Allen for collecting and donating fourteen boxes and four bags of personal care items for CASA children. As part of Rachel's Challenge which is sweeping across our nation, these youth did a bang

up job collecting items for their peers in need. Thank you for your kindness!

*The Johnson Family Foundation* continues to be an important and generous partner for CASA of Denton County. Providing much needed funding for services to children, the foundation has contributed more than \$32,000 to CASA since inception more than 13 years ago. Special thanks to Bud Johnson, Norma Johnson, Jeff Johnson and Cindy Johnson for your continued and generous gifts benefiting our CASA kids!

*Capital for Kids* is a new partner for CASA of Denton County that started their relationship with a bang! A \$15,000 donation was received in February 2014, helping CASA add services for an additional ten children in need for an entire year. Many thanks to the trustees of Capital for Kids for your generous support.



Denton Benefit League continues to be a steady, generous and special friend to CASA. Members awarded CASA with more than \$4,800 this year for cabinetry to be installed in the administration office conference room to house in-kind donations for children served by CASA! Stop by sometime to see what their donation did – it's amazing how much we can store in these cabinets and it's amazing how often those items change throughout the year. Thanks members of DBL for all you do!





Cheers for members of the Lewisville Noon Rotary Club! The club provided CASA with a gift of \$1,000 so that we can provide services to additional children in need. We are proud to have a continuing partnership with Rotary and appreciate the service they do within our community.

After the CASA Administration Office remodel was finished last year, CASA was notified that the handicap ramp/reserved parking was not code compliant and would have to be updated. Board and staff were quickly educated on how expensive such projects can be and went to work trying to find someone

who could cut the agency a deal. Randy Ahlfs and the team at Tri-Star Construction came to the rescue – in fact, they donated the entire project to CASA! Many special thanks are extended to this tremendous community partner for this generous gift! Through their donation, CASA was able to provide services to four CASA children for an entire year rather than paying for cement, signs, paint and labor! Your generosity truly is making a difference.

CASA extends heartfelt thanks this year to Denton Regional Medical Center for providing meals for CASA's training classes of new volunteer child advocates. Your support helps us save dollars on overhead that can be used to directly benefit children in need!



## Denton Regional Medical Center

We are honored on a regular basis to have many CASA friends who support the agency with in-kind donations. We hope you will share your business with those who do business for CASA – Hannah's/Eagle & Wheeler, Eagleton Photography, Discount Trophies, and TRT Communications. These folks save CASA a tremendous amount of operating funds each year so that more money can be utilized for direct services to children!

CASA is grateful for the many donations we receive indirectly through Denton County jurors, through United Way, state, federal and other employee workplace campaigns, and through matching gift funds through individual employers. Your designated gifts to CASA are truly a blessing to the children and families we serve and we thank you for keeping the needs of these children in your hearts.

## Cloud 9 Charities Fashion Show

Cloud 9 Charities has generously provided \$11,000 in support to CASA this year for a grand total of \$79,000 in six years! Special thanks to Kim Cloud and members of the charity's board of trustees for your vote of confidence in our services to the most vulnerable children in our community! And, thank you for the many ways you provide support to children and families! You truly make a difference.



## Thank you Girl Scout Troop 1675

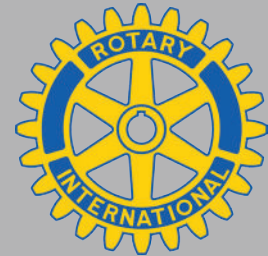
Many thanks to members of Girl Scout Troop 1675 in Flower Mound for their kindness in providing goodies for peers in need. The girls collected in-kind donations and funds and put together 50 Project Night Night bags for children served by CASA. These special bags contain a blanket, book, stuffed animal and other goodies that can be given to children as they enter foster care so they have comforting items that are all their own. CASA is grateful to be one of the agencies who benefited from the hard work of these awesome girl scouts!

Special thanks are extended to cousins Elizabeth Brannon and John Burke for their unique, beautiful and most generous gift for CASA teens in need. Elizabeth heard CASA speak about the need for special boxes

for some CASA teenagers to keep their private and personal items in as they enter or leave foster care and sometimes as they change foster placements. Elizabeth decided this was a gift she'd like to explore and before we knew it, had enlisted the help of John. John is quite a talented craftsman and made thirteen, wood boxes with wooden dividers and locks for CASA teens. The time, resources and true love for others is evident in their awesome gifts!

## Homemade Gifts of Love

The Land O'Lakes Quilt Guild and Robson Ranch Material Girls have been busy again and donated 20 handmade quilts and 146 handmade pillowcases for our CASA kids this season! A bouquet of thanks to all members of these groups for the love and talent they pour into these handmade goodies that will be lifetime treasures for the children served by CASA.



Special thanks to the Flower Mound Rotary Club for their generous grant of \$2,400 to help with Denton County Adoption Day in November. Funds will pay for court filing fees so that children served by CASA can be adopted into new families! Thank you for helping us change lives!

School supplies were abundant for CASA kids this year thanks to the generosity of employees of Labinal, members of Argyle United Methodist Church, the Bridlewood Mom's Club, Mike and Betty Moran and Cindy Marchant and Republic Title of Texas. Thank you for helping these kids feel "normal" as they headed back to school with everything they needed and blended into the crowd like all children want to do!

# Annual Recognition Dinner

## Recognizing Heroes for CASA

On April 1 CASA of Denton County treated volunteers, supporters and special friends to a wonderful evening at the Denton Country Club for the 15th Annual CASA Recognition Dinner. The program was fairly simple and yet very moving as CASA did a review of the past year and recognized and thanked the many heroes who make it possible every day for volunteer super heroes to provide advocacy in the court system for abused and neglected children. With a crowd of over 150 people in attendance, CASA staff extended thanks to the 260 people who volunteered in 2013, to those who blessed the organization with monetary donations, to those who graciously give in-kind donations and services, and to those who work tirelessly to provide important, life-altering advocacy for our CASA kids.

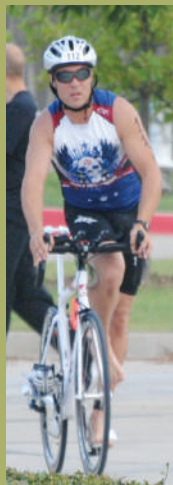
Special awards for 2013 were given to Marci Martinez for Attorney Ad Litem of the Year, Agnes Williams for the Healer of Hearts Award, Sue Hechinger for the Heartbeat of CASA Award, the UNT PUSH Organization for Outstanding Contributor, Don and Carole Womack for the Maurine Pearson Benefactor of the Year, Tracee Robertson for Rookie Advocate of the Year, Tom Kelly for the WITT (Whatever It Takes for Teens) Award, and Sarah Barker for the Shelby Hiser Child Advocate of the Year Award.



## The Blessing of Members of the St. Philip Women's Club

CASA has been fortunate for the past six years to partner with the members of the St. Philip Women's Club from St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church in Lewisville. The strength, determination and commitment of the women in this group is only exceeded by their love and generosity for others in the community. Since "adopting" the CASA agency and working to provide "extras" for the children served by CASA, they have contributed more than 100 bears for children, more than 600 Easter baskets, several hundred dollars of gift cards and provided 17 CASA youth transitioning from foster care into independent living with apartment/dorm warming gifts that set up these youth with kitchen, bathroom and bedroom needs like you cannot imagine. Many members personally contribute to CASA with additional in-kind and monetary donations and as if all that isn't enough, some have helped connect the children served by CASA with other resources and organizations in the community that can help meet their needs.

We have had the distinct pleasure of sharing the CASA story with these ladies over the years and what we learned is that their outreach extends far beyond just one organization. Just a few of the others they provide those "extras" for include Denton County Friends of the Family and Ronald McDonald House. In visiting with a few of the club members, they shared that their mission is to "unite women and families in social, spiritual, educational and service opportunities for the welfare of women and their families, the parish and the community at large." The work they do in our community is real evidence of their success on this mission. They are truly amazing and we thank each member for their service. You truly make a difference!



## Report on the 3rd Annual Toll Tag Triathlon Event

CASA of Denton County was "adopted" three years ago by The Kiwanis Club of Southern Denton County and this group is making a real difference for the children CASA serves. For any event that CASA is involved in, you'll see members of this Kiwanis Club volunteering, seeking sponsors and donations, securing participants and helping out in any way they can. The 3rd Annual Toll Tag Triathlon Event was held on Sunday, July 27 and was a huge success with more participants than ever. Thank you Kiwanians for your devotion to CASA kids!



# THANK YOU FOR HELPING US RAISE OVER \$133,000 IN SUPPORT OF THE SERVICES CASA PROVIDES FOR ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN!



The 14th Annual Pulling for Kids Event held on Friday, May 9 was incredible! For the fourth year in a row, the support of you, our community, broke all records and made the event our most successful to date raising more than \$133,000 in support of the services CASA provides for abused and neglected children. Presenting Sponsor Denton Regional Medical Center set the pace again this year with their commitment as our leading financial sponsor and provided bottled water, soda, Gatorade and some of the lunch food for a record breaking crowd of 371 shooters, more than 120 volunteers and a few extra folks who came to help us celebrate! This year, guests enjoyed breakfast tacos from Kroger, lunch hot dogs and sausage grilled up by First State Bank and their "executive grilling team" and a wonderful steak dinner provided by Outback Steakhouse of Denton! The Pulling for Kids event is one of two signature fund raising events held by CASA of Denton County each year. In its 14 year history, Pulling for Kids has raised more than \$825,000. These funds are a vital part of CASA's annual budget. They allow our agency to provide ongoing training for new and current volunteers, resulting in more services for the abused and neglected children who are so desperately in need of assistance. Thanks to all of the wonderful volunteers, shooters, sponsors, and donors who participated in the 14th Annual Pulling for Kids Tournament. Your steadfast commitment to CASA and the children we serve is what helps make this event better and better each year!

## THANKS TO 14TH PULLING FOR KIDS EVENT SPONSORS

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- Denton Regional Medical Center

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- Cobalt Capital Partners

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- Redlee SCS, Inc.

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- Starlite Sign Company

### TENT SPONSOR

- Boy Scouts of America, Circle 10 Council
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CASA of Denton County is a member agency of Texas CASA, Inc., the National CASA Association, and the United Ways of Denton County and Metropolitan Dallas.

If you receive two CASA newsletters, please give one to a friend and notify CASA at 940.243.2272 or [info@casadenton.org](mailto:info@casadenton.org). Thanks!



**CASA**

Court Appointed Special Advocates  
**FOR CHILDREN**

**DENTON COUNTY**

614 North Bell Avenue  
Denton, Texas 76209

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## *Wishful Thinking*

You can help us meet needs that are not included in the agency's budget. As a small nonprofit agency, with limited resources, we depend on the generosity of our friends to help meet needs and cash donations are not the only way to become a CASA benefactor. The less funding CASA spends on operating costs, the more the children benefit. To donate, call 940.243.2272.

### **NEEDS FOR THE OFFICE**

Speaking Opportunities • Volunteer Recruitment Opportunities  
20 lb. White Copy Paper • Paper Plates • Plastic Cutlery  
Paper Towels • Napkins  
Gift Cards to Office Depot, Sam's Club

### **NEEDS FOR THE CHILDREN**

Hugs!  
Gift Cards to Wal-Mart and Target  
Gift Cards to Clothing Stores

