



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

DENTON COUNTY

Winter 2016

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.

Executive Director's Message



Every Child Has a Chance – It's You. This is the theme we have been using throughout the year to share the CASA mission and needs with our community. It's true

you know, every child does have a chance, as long as members of our Denton County community are willing to be a part of that chance – the solution for these children who, through no fault of their own, are taken from everything that is familiar to them and placed in an unfamiliar, often frightening and desperately overburdened child welfare system. Court Appointed Special Advocates, or CASA, was created to make sure that these children are not lost in this system – that their individual, unique and special needs are met while they are in the foster care system and that they are placed in safe, nurturing, permanent homes, free of abuse and neglect, where they can thrive as part of a loving family.

At this time of year, CASA is blessed to have many groups and individuals who work to make sure that the holidays are special for our CASA kids and we are so grateful for this support. Unfortunately, the critical needs of these children are on-going and not just at special times of the year. While we are grateful for support of special needs and occasions, we encourage you to consider how you can help all year long. There are so many ways to be a part of the solution for children – their chance at success in life. Consider becoming a CASA volunteer child advocate, share with CASA staff an opportunity to make a presentation to a

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CASA of Denton County: CASA, Hope & Trust Go Hand-in-Hand

Amy thought she had a permanent home when she was adopted in 2011. Two short years later, that family would reject and abandon Amy, forcing her to re-enter foster care. Struggling with feelings of rejection, Amy was thrown into a system where she wouldn't know who to trust. Then Tracee stepped in. Tracee served as Amy's Court Appointed Special Advocate, or CASA. From the beginning of the case, Tracee has worked tirelessly to ensure that Amy is comfortable, safe and that she knows despite the history of everything that has happened to her, there are people out there who care about her.

YOUR VOICE CAN BE A CHILD'S ONLY CHANCE.

In three short years, Amy has been moved into eighteen placements all over the state of Texas. Tracee has driven hundreds of miles to retrieve Amy's personal belongings after they've gotten left behind when she was moved from placement to placement. Multiple times Amy has lost her glasses, and each time Tracee drives to multiple locations to find her glasses so that Amy can see properly. Tracee also ensures that Amy has clothes that are her own, clothes that fit, and clothes for all types of weather, including winter coats, even if it means Tracee herself has to pick Amy up to go shopping. Tracee even arranged for Amy to receive equine therapy on two separate occasions to help start the healing process. Through equine therapy, Amy met a caring therapist with whom she still keeps in contact.

No matter where Amy was placed, Tracee maintained a deep and caring relationship. She continued to visit on a consistent basis and talked with her on the phone in between visits. As their relationship grew and Amy began to trust again, Amy opened up to Tracee about a previous history of abuse that had never been discovered or talked about. This history brought context to Amy's behaviors, and the information was used as a guiding factor in her therapies and treatments. Amy's healing has progressed remarkably, and Tracee believes Amy is both ready and worthy for a safe, love and permanent home as soon as possible. Even when facing unrelenting adversity at times, Tracee has never stopped fighting for Amy's best interests. She continues to be the only constant for Amy and the familiar face and voice during a time of loss and confusion. Thanks for advocates like Tracee, hope and eventually trust can develop once again for children like Amy.



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Welcome New Graduates of Fall Advocacy Academy

Congratulations to twenty-one new volunteers who were sworn in as official CASA child advocates in October with Judge Brody Shanklin of the 211th District Court. Pictured left to right are: Back row, Ken Lively, Judy Frodyma, Charles Gross, Jill Coulter, Angela Cagan, Maria Bundock, Amanda McGowan, Berenice Vega, Chanel Knott, Steve Moomau; front row, Jewel Lively, Krystle Johnson, Heather Sides, B.J. Hardesty, Caroline Hrcir, Julie Hassell, Raena McEuin, Donna Hesters, Lisa Cain, Manoj Devdas. Not pictured: Ramon Sierra. Thank you for recognizing a need in the community and stepping up to speak up for children who need you!



Holiday Shopping for a Cause

CASA of Denton County is a member of several community reward programs, such as AmazonSmile and Kroger Community Rewards. Don't forget to designate CASA of Denton County as your organization of choice during your gift shopping and holiday dinner grocery shopping, and CASA can receive a portion of the sales as a donation!

Advocate Information Session

Are you or is someone you know interested in becoming a volunteer advocate for CASA?

We now host monthly information sessions to answer questions and provide more details on what it's like and how to become an advocate. Sessions dates and times are listed on the CASA website at www.casadenton.org.

**YOUR VOICE
COULD BE MY
ONLY CHANCE.**



Fall Events: | 11th Annual Kinship Fair

The 11th Annual Kinship Fair held Saturday, October 15, was simply wonderful! Special thanks to event organizers, the Greater Denton County Young Lawyer's Association, Child Protective Services and students from Texas Woman's University and the University of North Texas for helping to support, honor and recognize relatives and close family friends who welcome abused and neglected children into their homes. These special "foster" parents provide a safe, loving home for these children with little support from the child welfare system to help them with the challenges and burdens they face in providing for these children. The Fair is an opportunity for the community to help these families with special and everyday needs by providing food, coats, clothing, school supplies, toys and other special needs items while at the same time, providing a "festival" type atmosphere for the children to enjoy.



4th Annual Denton County Adoption Festival

On a Saturday in November, children from Denton County and other parts of the North Texas Region, were treated to a fall festival, courtesy of the Denton Rotary Club and neighboring clubs from Denton, Lewisville, Flower Mound and Highland Village. This was no ordinary festival however, this was an adoption festival where children in the child welfare system who are "waiting for an adoptive family" have an opportunity to meet with adoptive parents who have already been screened and approved by the State of Texas to adopt a child. Sponsored by the Denton Rotary Club and supported by CASA of Denton County and Child Protective Services (CPS), this unique event came to Denton County for the fourth year and was a big hit! Members of the various Rotary clubs and volunteers from CASA and CPS provided activities for the children to participate in while they visited with potential adoptive parents. All in all, the event was fun filled and hopefully will be a day to remember as children and potential adoptive families are united for a lifetime of love.



Rotary is an international service organization whose purpose is to bring together business and professional leaders in order to provide humanitarian services, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace locally and in the world. Members, also known as Rotarians, live by the motto of "service above self" and the Denton Rotary Club is a perfect, living example of this motto. Through their sponsorship of the Denton County Adoption Festival, they definitely meet this goal. The various clubs who participated also support many other worthwhile projects in the Denton County community through both volunteerism and financial support. Rotarians can be CASA volunteers and CASA volunteers can be Rotarians! We invite you to be a part of one or both of these excellent organizations to help children and the community at large.





Gifts from the Heart

Heartfelt thanks to donors who made contributions to CASA between August 1, 2016 and November 30, 2016.

Grant Funding Sources

- Capital for Kids Foundation
- City of Carrollton
- City of Denton
- City of Frisco
- City of Lewisville
- Cloud 9 Charities
- Denton County
- Gaston Episcopal Hospital Foundation
- Office of the Attorney General
- Texas CASA, Inc.
- Town of Flower Mound
- United Way of Denton County, Inc.
- United Way of Metropolitan Dallas
- Victim of Crime Act Grant
- The Gil and Dody Weaver Foundation

CASA is pleased to have received gifts in honor of...

- Nancy Eisenhuth From Karen Hosey
- Sherri Gideon From Jack and Nancy Fisher
- Mackinzie Heard From Amy Taylor
- Pattie Huestis From Vickie Schallock
- Debbie Jensen From Jill Marr
- Debbie Mancino From Patricia Moore
- Betty Moran From James and Rita Moran

CASA is pleased to have received a gift in memory of...

- Jean Collier From M. Jean Greenlaw

- Andrew Lewis From Denise Spalding
- Josephine Weber From Mike and Betty Moran
- Sonny Wooten From Bill Sitzes

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.

- Happy and Nancy Acee
- Francisca Al-Waely
- Adam Arnett
- Richard and Sheila Baker
- Chris and Sue Bancroft
- Tracy Bass
- Forrest and Jill Beadle
- LeAnn Birden
- Brent and Chrysendra Bowen
- Elizabeth Brannon
- Byron Brown
- Brownie Scout Troop 5376
- Stanley Bugala
- Stephanie Bui
- Jean Callahan
- Maureen Callahan
- Susannah Campbell
- Carrollton Tennis Association
- CecilCo
- Chuck and Lori Christensen
- Justin Claunch
- Jay Clayton

- Mark Cosby
- Jimmy and Jill Coulter
- Darlene Covich
- CW Floors and Lighting
- Mike DeFord
- Denton Hi-Noon Lions Club
- Denton Triangle Lions Club
- Kaye Dotson
- Bob and Dianne Edmondson
- Nancy Eisenhuth
- Lewis and Lauri Etheridge
- Louis and Charlene Fausak
- Dan and Lisa Ferguson
- Dave and Debbie Finley
- Todd and Chris Price
- Richard and Mary Kay Fisher
- Michael and Angie Fitzsimmons
- Andrew Fortune
- Jerry and Melinda Galler
- Wes and Sherri Gideon
- Kenneth and Lorinda Gomez
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- Jean Greenlaw
- GREENPOINT Technologies
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- Sarah Greene
- Thomas Hetzler
- Pattie Huestis
- Mark and Becky Ingram
- Brian and Debbie Jensen
- Rick and Yolanda Joosten
- Mark and Marci Kawalek

- Gary and Elizabeth Keller
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- Sennett and Carolyn Kirk
- Kroger Food Stores
- Duane and Shelly Krueger
- Land O' Lakes Quilt Guild, Inc.
- Amy Lankford
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- Edie Lenaburg
- Lewisville Retired Area School Association
- Lewisville Senior Center Needlework Group
- Lone Star Ag Credit
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- Annette Martinez
- John McGee
- Paula McReynolds
- Medical City Lewisville
- Patricia Metting
- Thomas and Vicki Mielke
- Aubrey and Linda Moody
- Mike and Betty Moran
- James and Rita Moran
- Christina Morris
- Pat and Liz Moyer
- Diane Naquin
- Michael and Patricia Needleman
- North Texas Tollway Authority
- Omega Delta Phi Fraternity
- Andrew Passons
- Floyd Pittman
- Deborah Prock
- Project Night Night
- Chuck and Renae Redfearn
- Pat and Cindy Reid
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- Greg and Maureen Studer
- Bill and Sherrie Taylor
- Sue Tejml
- Jack Thomson
- Ticket to Dream Foundation
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- Jabrielle Troup
- TRT Communications, Inc.
- Stacey Tucker
- TXU Energy
- Mark and Paula Wagner
- Margaret Wenzel
- Jim and Joyce White
- Theresa White
- Megan Williams
- Russell and Wendy Wise
- Bill Wood
- Chavel and Teresa Yzaguirre

18TH ANNUAL Evening of ELEGANCE

Thanks to Sponsors:

Diamond Sponsor

- DATCU Credit Union

Ruby Sponsor

- Goodson Engineering

Emerald Sponsors

- Ciera Bank
- First State Bank
- First United Bank
- Medical City Lewisville
- TXU Energy
- Wood, Thacker, & Weatherly, PC

Wine Sponsor

- Moët Hennessey

Special thanks to:

- CASA Board of Directors
- Chef Morris Salerno, Stacey Mahieu and Staff

- Eagleton Photography
- Essence Speegle
- Evening of Elegance Committee

- Mike Fickling
- Omega Delta Phi Fraternity
- Southern Denton County Alumnae Chapter of Kappa Alpha Theta
- Texas CASA

Auction & In-Kind Donors

- Artistic Gourmet Adventures
- Bistecca
- Buckets & Bows Maid Service
- Denton Record-Chronicle
- Escape Rooms HQ
- Melinda and Jerry Galler
- Brandon Martino
- North Texas Print Solutions

- The Speedway Club at Texas Motor Speedway
- Star Local Media
- Valpak

Celebrity Waiters

- Judge Jonathan Bailey
- Judge Margaret Barnes
- County Commissioner Andy Eads
- Justice Lee Gabriel
- Judge David Garcia
- Judge Tiffany Haertling
- Judge Mary Horn
- Judge Bruce McFarling
- County Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell
- Judge Robert Ramirez
- Judge Bonnie Robison
- Judge Doug Robison
- Judge Sherry Shipman
- Judge Virgil Vahlenkamp
- Judge Coby Waddill

Thanks to the support of sponsors, generous in-kind donors, committed volunteers and special guests, the 18th Annual Evening of Elegance raised more than \$58,000! As generous guests had a good time strolling down the red carpet, Cameron Cox, red carpet emcee, announced each guest who then had the opportunity to look beautiful with the expertise of expert photographer Walter Eagleton. Chef Morris Salerno, Stacey Mahieu, and the Bistecca team honored guests with exquisite cuisine and Celebrity Waiters provided exceptional service to each guest. Highlights of the evening included keynote speaker Essence Speegle, foster care alumna, who reminded us of the importance of supporting CASA, but more importantly, the children served by CASA. Thank you to everyone who made the evening one to remember!





Kudos Corner

CASA is blessed



Hats off to Brownie Scout Troop 5376, led by Julie Croom, for the wonderful Night Night Bags they provided for our CASA kids this year! These young ladies are really setting a beautiful example for other youth to get involved in helping our friends in need. Thank you!

Cheers to Trietsch Memorial United Methodist Church for including CASA in No Selfie Saturday Activities on October 22nd. This generous group donated \$290 in gift cards for our Care for Kids fund to help provide "extras" for CASA kids in the foster care system.



CASA has been blessed for several years to have the support of the local chapter of **Omega Delta Phi** as supporters and friends in a variety of ways – helping with fund raisers and events and this year, hosting a 5K event on the UNT Campus that benefited CASA and the children we serve. Special thanks for the most generous donation of \$2,400 – proceeds from this first annual event!

Many thanks this year to the Carrollton Tennis Association for toiletries and gift cards collected as "extras" to help meet the special needs of CASA kids! We simply would not be able to provide for these special needs without the help of wonderful groups like this in our community! Thank you!

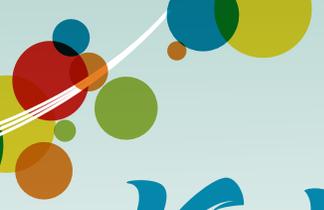


Members of the St. Philip Women's Club did it again! They donated baskets of needs for seven CASA youth who were moving into independent living from foster care and starting college or joining the workforce. The care and generosity these ladies share is truly a blessing to these young people as they venture out on their own. Special thanks!

The ladies in the Land O'Lakes Quilt Guild and Lewisville Senior Center Needlework Group are amazing doers and givers! This year they have donated a record number of handmade quilts, crocheted blankets, pillow cases, Christmas stockings and snap happy pouches! They are joined this year by Margaret Wenzel who not only donated quilts for CASA kids but also handmade scarves and caps! The love and attention these women put into these gifts is felt by our CASA kids forever! Thank you for caring!



A bouquet of thanks to video production star Jon Murphy! Jon helped CASA produce a video to include in the Texas CASA 2016 Amplify Your Voices Spirit Video Contest! While we didn't win – that wasn't Jon's fault – the winner just had better actors and actresses! We had a great time filming and Jon was wonderful to work with. Thanks Jon for putting up with us CASA folks!



Kudos Corner

Our dear friends at Project Night Night graciously donated 70 Night Night Tote Bags for CASA kids this year. These special bags provide a few extras for kids as they enter the foster care system or as they have special needs to be met. They are a comforting way for a CASA advocate to meet their child and share the community's love for them! Many special thanks for your gifts over the years!



A big hug to members of the "revived" and "new" CASA Legislative Advocacy Team (LAT). This group is working hard to educate our local Texas Senators and Representatives about CASA and the many hurdles and challenges CASA kids face while in the child welfare system in Texas and locally. Most recently, LAT team members Mike Fitzsimmons, Bonnie Olsen, Sherri Gideon and Ashleigh Hernandez met with Travis Broussard, Legislative Director for Senator Jane Nelson to share information. These meetings are especially critical as we gear up for the 85th legislative session set to begin in January 2017!

Cheers to members of the Lewisville Area Retired School Association for donating books for CASA kids! CASA has several events throughout the year where books are distributed to children but also uses them for birthday and other special occasion gifts! We love to encourage learning and reading for our CASA kids and appreciate your help in keeping this resource available!

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 – Eagleton Photography, Discount Trophies, North Texas Print Solutions 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.

CASA Set to Celebrate 25th Anniversary in 2017

The legacy of literally hundreds of people who have paved the way for CASA to be successful and who have made an indelible difference in the lives of thousands of children continues today – 25 years after the agency first opened its doors to help abused and neglected children in need. Those still involved with CASA owe a debt of gratitude to those who worked tirelessly to see this agency come to fruition. Those who have benefited have the footprint of their love and commitment in their hearts. Join us in 2017 as we celebrate 25 years of service to children and begin planning what the next 25 will look like! We are still in the planning stages of how to celebrate but know that we will kick off a special campaign early in the year to raise 2,500 \$25 gifts to commemorate 25 years! We'd love for you to be a part of our activities – stay tuned for more!



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

- 20 lb. White Copy Paper
- Paper products including paper towels, toilet paper, and paper plates
- Gift Cards to Office Depot, Office Max, Sam's Club
- Speaking Opportunities

Needs for the Children

- Hugs!
- Tickets for local experiences including Dallas or Fort Worth Zoo, Perot Museum and other child-friendly places
- Gift Cards to Wal-Mart and Target
- Gift Cards to Clothing Stores



Executive Director's Message

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group you belong to, volunteer at special events or awareness booths, share your resources (financial and in-kind), and finally, encourage others to do the same.

We truly and deeply appreciate those who are already "on board" and providing a chance for a child – won't you join us in our efforts to give every single child in need a chance at success in life? You can truly make a difference. We can help you learn how.

Sherri Gideon, Executive Director

CASA of Denton County, Inc.
Phone: 940.243.2272
Fax: 940.243.1605
Website: www.casadenton.org
Email: info@casadenton.org



www.facebook.com/casadenton.org

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 received two CASA newsletters, please give one to a friend and notify CASA at 940.243.2272 or info@casadenton.org. Thanks!

SPEAK UP FOR ME IN COURT

EVERY CHILD DESERVES A CHANCE – IT'S YOU.

As a Court Appointed Special Advocate, or CASA volunteer, you can keep abused and neglected children safe while they reach a safe, permanent home.



CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

DENTON COUNTY

614 North Bell Avenue
Denton, Texas 76209

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*Sending you **CASA** wishes for a warm and memorable holiday season that extends into the new year! Thanks for your support and generosity!*



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Cheri Fry

Pattie Huettis

Mary
Cabrera

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