



WILL COUNTY CASA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President
Dennis Holt

Vice President
Colleen Wengler

Secretary
Denise Winfrey

Treasurer
Carrie May

Past President
Dennis Wolff

Members at Large
James Albritton
Mike Hilton
Winnifred Nyhus
Michele Rosenfeld
Isaac Sancken

Advisory Committee
Sherri Freeman
Bonita Hutchinson
Cindy June
Natalie Manley

CASA Staff
Rita Facchina
Executive Director
Michelle Becker
Administrative Manager

Denise Beran
Case Manager

Lisa Dailey
Volunteer Coordinator

Gayle Douthit
Volunteer Manager

Geraldine Leinenweber
Case Manager



New Executive Director builds program

A spirit of teamwork is evident in the Will County CASA office under the direction of new Executive Director Rita Facchina. Rita brings a wealth of corporate experience to the position, with an accomplished prior career as an accountant for Ecolab in Joliet.

No stranger to the CASA organization, Rita also served on its Board of Directors as Treasurer for the past five years. Rita earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in accounting from the University of St. Francis. She and her husband, Mark, are residents of Will County.

Board President Dennis Holt stated, "Rita Facchina has served our board extremely well in the past as a volunteer. With her taking on this leadership role, we are confident that her corporate background and strong work ethic will bring our organization to a new level of expertise for the children of Will County."

While she believes that the organization has served the community very well, the new Executive Director said that she hopes to improve its services even further. Some of her goals include streamlining the director's office, disseminating a better understanding of the CASA message to community members and organizations, developing additional funding sources and increasing the number of children served. She stated, "I look forward to the challenges of



Executive Director Rita Facchina

developing CASA to the next level. I feel strongly that once people learn how they can work with us to help abused and neglected children right in our own community, they will join us in the effort."

\$15 for 15

In honor of the 15 year anniversary of CASA of Will County, we invite you to participate in our new Individual Donor Campaign. We are asking sponsors to donate \$15 to celebrate 15 years of service to children by Will County CASA. Please complete the form at the bottom of page 2 to help us implement this new program.

CASA of Will County cares about our community's children.

Our primary goal is to ensure that children who are abuse or neglect victims have a CASA volunteer advocate working and speaking for them in the juvenile court system.

We help children to have a safe, permanent, nurturing home as quickly as possible.

We are proud that we have increased the number of children served by 173% over the past seven years and the number of our volunteer advocates from 36 to 72, a 100% increase!

Please take the time to learn more about this beneficial organization. Go to our website www.willcountyillinois.com/casa or give us a call at 815-730-7072.



The importance of teamwork

Our CASA case managers support and mentor 15 to 20 CASA volunteer advocates. Our CASA advocates work with one or two families per year.

The case managers directly supervise the CASA volunteers' activities on each case. They meet monthly with each volunteer advocate to review the progress made on their case, reviewing every prepared court report for content and accuracy.

In addition, case managers attend all court hearings with the CASA advocate to support both the advocate and the child.



This kind of teamwork is vital to the success of our program and to the support of a child. The abused child feels most alone when he or she is

betrayed by someone the child once trusted. The overwhelming experience of facing a maze of social service agencies and courtrooms is a critical time for the support of the advocate and case manager. The top priority of our case manager and CASA volunteer teams is to minimize any permanent damage to the children.

CASA of Will County currently has four highly experienced and valued case managers and 72 volunteer advocates. These individuals are so important to the success of our program. Our CASA team is the backbone of support for these children who need to know that adults are on their side. For more information about becoming a volunteer advocate in this beneficial program, please call 815-730-7072 or email casa@willcountyillinois.com.



\$15 for 15

New individual donor program

CASA is dependent upon donations from individuals and businesses to sustain its goals. In celebration of CASA of Will County's 15 years of service to Will County children, we invite you to participate in this new program. We are asking \$15 of each individual donor to continue our mission of recruiting, training and supervising volunteers to serve as advocates for abused and neglected children in our community. Our goal is to provide a CASA advocate for every child who comes before the Juvenile Court. Won't you consider joining us in this endeavor? Just complete and return this form with your tax-deductible check made payable to CASA of Will County or your credit card information. Thank you for your support! Questions? Call 815-730-7072.

Yes! In celebration of CASA of Will County's 15 year anniversary of service to children, I will support its efforts to continue its mission. My method of payment is shown below.

____ Check is enclosed made out to CASA of Will County in the amount of \$_____.

____ Credit card type _____ Credit Card # _____ Expiration date _____

Name on credit card _____ Signature authorizing CASA to charge card _____

Name _____ Phone _____ Email address _____

Address _____

Please mail to CASA of Will County, 3200 W. McDonough Street • River Valley Justice Center • Joliet, IL. 60431

Sixteen new volunteer advocates

A recent training class was very successful, resulting in 16 new volunteer advocates. Held at Lincoln-Way Central High School in New Lenox, the new advocates were sworn in by Chief Judge White and are now serving children of our community.

A Volunteer CASA Appointed Special Advocate is responsible to:

Investigate all aspects of the child's life and the parties involved with the child and the abuse/neglect case. Prepare court reports for the Judge summarizing findings and making recommendations.

Monitor compliance with Court Orders ensuring court ordered services are being provided to the child & family.

Facilitate and assist court & social ser-



vice agencies to provide ordered family services eliminating delays & advancing the child's case.

Advocate for the child and serve as the Child's "Voice in Court".

- Do you have strong interpersonal skills with people struggling with difficult problems?
- Do you have a sincere interest in the welfare of children?

- Are you at least 21 years of age?
- Are you willing to undergo a criminal history check, personal reference checks and personal interview?
- Are you willing to complete 30 hours of pre-service training?
- Do you have 10 to 15 hours a month available for volunteer service?

If you answered yes to the above, you might be perfect for becoming a CASA Volunteer Advocate!

We hope that you will consider becoming a part of this vital organization on behalf of Will County children.

For more information:
www.willcountyillinois.com/casa
 815-730-7072

IGive.com program to benefit CASA

Do you love shopping online? Consider the gift that keeps on giving by participating in a new program to benefit CASA.

This is a wonderful new way for CASA to be the beneficiary of a cash-back reward by over 700 stores that agree to return a percentage of each purchase to worthy causes.

If you love shopping online at Gap, Staples, Barnes & Noble, Best Buy, QVC, Penney's, Nordstrom, E-Bay, just to name a few, please go to:

www.igive.com

We have registered CASA with this program and ask that you consider purchasing through the site and select CASA of Will County, Inc. as your cause.

Shop in the comfort of your own home, avoid the crowds while benefiting CASA! All funds received from this program will be used to fulfill our mission for the children. Thank you!



Planning for next year's events

We are hard at work planning our fund raising events for next year. Please mark your calendar to join us at these events. As always, all proceeds will benefit Will County children through our CASA programs. These are tentative plans and may be modified as they get closer.

April 11, 2009 is the date of our CASA-Blanca Wine Tasting. It will combine our popular CASABlanca event with our D'Vine wine tasting. This year we will

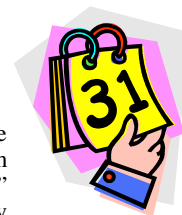
reach out to the Bolingbrook community by hosting it at the Bolingbrook Country Club and inviting our annual dedicated sponsors as well as new Bolingbrook residents.

July 26, 2009 Poker Run. Get your motors running for this one! This annual event is always fun and we invite riders and spectators to join in. We will end the run at the enjoyable Heroes West Sports Grill at Houbolt & I-80.

September 2009 is being considered for a tentative Golf Outing. More details will be forthcoming on this.

Another new event will be held in October. "I'm Smarter than a 5th Grader" is planned as a family Halloween party. It will be similar to the popular TV show that stumps adults and children with tough questions. Wear your favorite Halloween costume and participate in these fun and safe Halloween activities.

Please consider joining us for some or all of these events! Volunteers are also needed. Please call 815-730-7072 to volunteer to help.



Thunder in July Poker Run



More than 200 bikers rolled across the highways of Will County for the CASA of Will County's fifth annual Poker Run on July 27. The event raised \$5,000 that supports the CASA mission of recruiting and training volunteer advocates to speak to the court on behalf of abused and neglected children in Will County. A huge "thank you" goes out to all participants and sponsors for making this event a great success.



A D'Vine Event Wine Tasting



CASA of Will County was also the beneficiary of this fundraiser on behalf of children in our community. The September 26 event was held at the Joliet Country Club. Patrons enjoyed wine tasting from five different vendors, delicious appetizers, carving stations and a chocolate fountain. Along with entertainment by Peter Oprisko, a silent auction was in full swing, with wonderful items up for auction donated by generous individuals and businesses. Special thanks to our donors and participants. We truly appreciate your continued support!



A recent CASA success story

We are proud to share with you a story with a happy ending, thanks to the hard work of our CASA advocates and case workers on behalf of a little boy. This boy came into the system after his mother left him at an aunt's home for over seven days with no safety plan.

His mother said she was going to come back the next day to get him but she did not return. His mother was a home health care nurse and lived where she worked, not considering the fact that her son had no place to live.



The boy was put into foster care and his mother was told to find acceptable housing, get counseling and manage her medication, per her service plan. She did not comply with these instructions.

DCFS and CASA explored the option of the boy going to live with his biological father and half siblings in Jamaica. His mother was resistant at first and was not cooperative in providing CASA with proper documentation necessary to obtain the boy's passport.

The time and effort on the part of our CASA advocates and case workers made the difference. The boy is well on his way to a new life after being returned to Jamaica on Oct 12 to join his family. He is an amazing young man. Even considering the placement in three different foster homes and schools within one year, he still managed to maintain straight A's in his school work.

A flight to remember

A unique auction item from our D'Vine Event made for a wonderful birthday for Richard Suter. Geri Pope was the lucky high bidder on the ride in a World War II fighter plane generously donated by Mr. & Mrs. Tom Buck. Geri chose to watch from below while Richard enjoyed his ride. Special thanks to all of our auction donors and all those in attendance at our D'Vine Event who made the night such a big success.

Shown in photo: (left to right) Tom Buck, Richard Suter, and Geri Pope.



A big thank you to our CASA interns

We have been fortunate to have the benefit of two interns for the past several months. Special thanks to University of Illinois at Chicago intern Nereyda Herrera and Governor's State University intern Tara Thomas.

These hard working young women have been extremely helpful to our program. They have been out in the



community, working cases, investigating services for children, advocating and writing reports for the judge.

Students majoring in Criminal Justice or Social Services might consider serving an internship with CASA. Their time with us gives them great experience as it gives them considerable time working in the courts.

More information is at 815-730-7072.



CASA OF WILL COUNTY
3200 W. McDONOUGH STREET
RIVER VALLEY JUSTICE CENTER
JOLIET, IL 60432

815-730-7072
www.willcountyllinois.com/casa

Inside this issue . . .

- ◆ *The importance of teamwork*
- ◆ *New individual donor program \$15 for 15*
- ◆ *Photos from successful fundraisers*

**For all your printing
and mailing needs:**

**HERMES
MAILING
SERVICES**

**Direct Mail Data Processing and Lettershop Services
1603 Rock Creek Blvd., Joliet, IL 60431
815-744-5438 • akis.haitas@hermesmail.net**

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the National Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Association, together with the state and local members, is to support and promote court-appointed volunteer advocacy for abused and neglected children so that they can thrive in safe, permanent homes.

NEXT YEAR'S TENTATIVE EVENTS

April 11, 2009
CASABlanca Wine Tasting
Bolingbrook Country Club

July 26, 2009
Poker Run

September 2009
Golf Outing

October 2009
I'm Smarter than a 5th Grader
(Family Halloween Party)

CASA partners with Herald Angel program



We were pleased to learn that CASA of Will County, Inc. has been designated as a recipient for the Herald Angel program.

Sponsored by the Herald News, the Herald Angels campaign is a fundraising effort to help needy people throughout the Will and Grundy County areas.

CASA will help ten needy families during the holidays with the \$1,500 it receives through the Herald Angels program.

A big thank you to the Herald News for its efforts in helping those in need, particularly during these hard economic times.

More information about the Herald Angels program is with the Herald News, 300 Caterpillar Drive, Joliet.

*Thank You
Herald News!*

At this special time of year, we thank all of our volunteers, advocates, sponsors, donors and the many others who support our mission of advocacy for children. By working together, we are making a difference!

All of us at CASA of Will County, Inc. wish you and your loved ones a wonderful holiday season!