



The CASA Voice

CASA: Putting Children First December 2014 Issue

CASA For the Highland Lakes Area: Serving Blanco, Burnet,
Lampasas, Llano and San Saba Counties
1719 Ridgeview
Kingsland, TX 78639

CASA Stats

Number of children
being served by our
CASA program today:
201

Number of Active
Volunteers at CASA for
the Highland Lakes
Area:

75

Number of children
currently being served
from each of our
counties:

Blanco - **11**

Burnet - **81**

Lampasas - **41**

Llano - **28**

San Saba - **40**

Number of children
who were placed in a
stable, permanent and
loving home so far this
year:

151

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Upcoming Events

- **December 13th:**
Toy Drive to Benefit
CASA - you can
drop off donations
until Christmas at
the CASA office or
pick up an Angel at
Security State Bank
in Marble Falls.
- **February 12th:**
CASA Day at the
Capital. On this day
CASA staff and
volunteers will
travel from all over
the state and meet
in Austin to make
sure that our state
representatives
know about CASA
and understand the
needs of foster
children throughout
the State of Texas.
Contact us if you
are interested in
participating!

Headline Story: Tis the Season!!!

A Message from the Desk of the Executive Director



Pictured Above: One of the CASA kids enjoys the CASA/Burnet
County Child Welfare Board Christmas Party! Santa stole the
show and this little girl was so excited to see Santa and show
him her dress, which matches Santa's suit!!!! See more about
the Christmas Party on Pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter.

CASA For the Highland Lakes Area

Tis the Season!!!!!!

The Christmas Party for our CASA kids was a huge success! Thank you to the Burnet County Child Welfare Board and to all of the volunteers and staff that helped to make this event so special for the abused and neglected children that we serve! We had over 100 children and their families attend this year and the kids all had so much fun decorating cookies, playing games, eating snacks, and, of course, visiting with Santa!!!! For many children that we serve, this is their first actual Christmas experience and I was so blown away at the time and care that all of the volunteers put into making this event the best Christmas Party for our kids!

For most of us, The Holidays are such a joyous time of year! This time of year evokes memories of the past with our loved-ones and helps us to realize how blessed we are. One of my fondest memories as a child at Christmas is getting a batch of homemade cookies from my grandmother, which was always delicately wrapped in a Collin Street Bakery Fruitcake Tin. I am sure that for you, there are fond memories surrounding this time of year as well and I know that our CASA kids now have a Christmas Party to remember and look back on!

For many, this time of year is also a time to reflect not only on the blessings of which you have been bestowed, but on the blessings that you wish to give to others. I know that all of you who receive this newsletter are well versed in the gift of giving, for it is because of your giving spirit that you are part of the CASA network! This year we have been so blessed by many community members who have contacted us with a desire to give to CASA for the benefit of the children we serve. The kindness of the human spirit is truly something of wonder! I am so blessed to work in a profession where I witness, each and every day, people giving of themselves for the benefit of others! It is with a spirit of gratitude that I say to you, "Merry Christmas to you and yours and may your blessings this holiday season be bountiful!"

Sincerely,

Kristen K. Harris
Executive Director at CASA for the Highland Lakes Area

Tis the Season

CASA HAPPENINGS!



Left: Children enjoy visiting with Santa at the Christmas party, then picking out a beanie baby and a candy cane after telling Santa what is on their wish list!

Right: CASA volunteers, Susan Bundrick and Debbie Kane were Santa's Helpers at the Christmas Party!





CASA For the Highland Lakes Area

CASA HAPPENINGS! (Continued)



Left: CASA Staff pose for a photo opportunity just before the CASA/Burnet County Child Welfare Board Christmas Party for the Kids begins!

Below: Judge Cheryl Mabray and CASA Volunteer, Cyndi Turner, at the Christmas Party for CASA kids!!!



Left: Judge Van Orden swore in 5 new CASA volunteers for our CASA program on Friday, December 5th.

CASA CORNER

Glitter Ornaments!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

This is an easy craft that can be done with your CASA kids of any age, or any child in your life!

Supplies: Pledge with Future Shine Floor Wax (blue cap); Glitter; Clear Glass Ornaments; Cotton Swabs and a craft funnel or paper to make a funnel.

Steps: Pop the hangers out of the ornaments. They should be easy to remove. Squirt the floor wax inside and coat the inside of the ornament. Set the ornament back over the floor wax bottle to let the excess floor wax drain back out. If there are any bubbles inside, take a cotton swab and pop the bubbles. Then, using a funnel, dump some glitter into the inside of the ornament and coat the entire inside with glitter. You can then shake out the excess glitter to use on the next ornament! Once dry, replace the top of the ornament and you can decorate with ribbon, if you like!!!! Have fun!!!!!!





Applause to Advocates!!!!!!!!!!



Our Advocates do amazing things each and every day. Here are just a few things that we at the CASA office have been amazed about over the past month!!!!!!!!!! Let's give each of these volunteers a great BIG round of APPLAUSE!!!!!!!!!!

Happy Birthday to Our Advocate!

Jimmie Rushing
December 14th



- An applause is in order for **Ginner Boswell**, who recently moved to the Dallas/Fort Worth area, but is committed to seeing her CASA cases here through to the end. **Ginner** is assigned to 3 cases in our service area and recently drove down here to supervise a visit for her youngest CASA kids, ages 2 and 1. This was a final visit between the children and parents and **Ginner** wanted to make sure that the kids were not traumatized in any way. The 2 year old was apprehensive during the visit and **Ginner** stayed by her side for comfort. Also, **Ginner** drove down again to participate in Court and in the Christmas Party for the CASA kids! Thank you, **Ginner Boswell**, for all that you do for your CASA kids!!!!



CASA WISH LIST

Gift Cards for Teens in Care

New toys for children of all ages

Paper Products for our training classes, including plates, plastic cutlery, and paper towels

Snack Items for our Training Classes, including drinks, nuts, chips, etc.

Monetary donations are also always accepted by CASA and can be delivered to our office in person or via mail.

- Another huge applause is in order for **Amy Perkins!** Amy has been a CASA advocate for 8 years and has served a total of 17 children on 11 different cases! **Amy** is retiring from volunteering with CASA, but we know that her heart is with her CASA kids and that she will continue to serve as a mentor and advocate for them for years to come! Thank you, **Amy Perkins**, for your dedication to CASA and for supporting so many children and youth who have gone through our program!
- We have one more round of applause to hand out! On Friday, December 5th, Judge Van Orden swore in 5 new volunteers! Let's give a round of applause to the following newest advocates with our program!!!!!!!!!! Congratulations to **April Bergstrom, Julie Biggs, Janice Burrage, Don Cruver and Gail McMillan!!!!** CASA for the Highland Lakes Area is lucky to have you as part of our team!

Special Announcements

- **CASA Angels** are still available for the Holiday Season. If you would like to help support CASA kids this Holiday Season you can pick up Angels at our Angel Tree located at Security State Bank and Trust in Marble Falls or you can drop off new toys or gift cards at our office. We are still in need of donations for this very worthy cause, as we are currently serving more than 200 children, all of which deserve a Very, Merry Christmas!!!!!!!!!!
- Please consider volunteering with CASA, if you are not already one of our volunteers. As 2015 approaches and New Years Resolutions are made, consider making a resolution to be the difference in the life of a child in foster care. You can do this by becoming a CASA volunteer! Contact our office for more information!
- Our next training class for new volunteers will begin at the end of January. Please contact our office quickly to get on this list and begin the process of becoming approved for our volunteer program!



CASA For the Highland Lakes Area

Thank You to All of Our Donors!!!!

With Special Thanks to the Following:

Christ Redeemer Fellowship - Marble Falls, TX

Church at Horseshoe Bay - Horseshoe Bay, TX

Anonymous

Evelyn Gallerano

Hal and Sue Harton

Highland Lakes Service League

Michael Kammlah

Woody McCasland

Trinity Episcopal Church - Marble Falls, TX

Our Mission:

The mission of CASA For the Highland Lakes Area is to recruit, train and supervise court appointed volunteers to advocate for children who come into the court system as a result of abuse and neglect. Those volunteers, who serve as

Guardians *ad Litem*, will make recommendations to the court, based on fact finding and investigation, in the best interest of the child.

Our Goal:

That every child that enters into foster care in our 5-County Area continue to be able to be served by our CASA Program. No child should go without a CASA to advocate for their needs!!

Become a CASA today!!!!

Be In The Know: Get the CASA Voice Newsletter!!!!

We are pleased to provide this CASA newsletter each month to all of our CASA Volunteers, Board Members, CASA Friends and supporters!

If at any time you decide that you want to be removed from our email list, please send an email to the following email address and you will be removed from our list:

kristen@highlandlakescasa.com

If you or someone you know would like to be added to our email list, please send a request to the same email address.

We have every respect for your privacy, and we will not share your information with any person on business.