



The CASA Voice

CASA: Putting Children First February 2015 Issue

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

CASA Quick Stats

Number of children
being served by our
CASA program today:

188

Number of Active
Volunteers who are
currently serving on a
case at CASA for the
Highland Lakes Area:

61

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

Blanco - 12

Burnet - 77

Lampasas - 38

Llano - 30

San Saba - 31

Headline Story: CASA Day at the Capitol

Upcoming Events

- February 12th -
CASA Day at the
Capitol

- March 3rd -
Raise a Glass for
CASA Fundraiser
at Flat Creek
Enoteca in
Marble Falls.
More
information on
page 3.

- March 31st -
Spring Open
House at the
CASA office from
4:30-6:30PM. All
are welcome to
attend!
- April 6th - New
Volunteer
Training begins
this week.



Above: **CASA Day at the Capitol 2013.** Members of our local CASA program met with State Representatives and State Senators to talk about issues that children in foster care face and what our state law-makers can do to alleviate some of the challenges that children in foster care deal with on a regular basis.

Pictured above are several staff and volunteers from CASA for the Highland Lakes Area with State Senator, Troy Fraser.

CASA Day at the Capitol will occur this year on February 12, 2015 and our local program will participate once again, to show our support for children in foster care.

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Save the Date!

CASA will be hosting a Spring Open House on March 31st at our office, so save the date! The Open House will occur from 4:30-6:30PM and all community members are encouraged to attend. Drinks, snacks and door prizes will be provided.

Interested in Sharing CASA With Your Group or Organization?

Contact the CASA office and we will be happy to come and share what we do. We have spoken to church groups, civic organizations, Bible study groups and social groups and we would LOVE to do more! No group is too small!!!! We can also help you plan a "Party with a Purpose"! Contact us to see how you can help us spread the word about CASA and how we help children in need.



Above: Group Photo of CASA for the Highland Lakes Area at CASA Day at the Capitol in 2013.

CASA Day at the Capitol is Almost Here!!!!

Many of you are probably wondering what exactly CASA Day at the Capitol is and how our CASA program fits into this big day. During each legislative session at the Texas State Capitol 1 day is designated as "CASA Day" and all of the 71 CASA programs from across the State of Texas are invited to storm the Capitol building. CASA staff and volunteers from across Texas show up wearing their "CASA Blue" shirts and prepared to discuss with their state legislators issues that are important for children in foster care. Because foster care is a state-funded system, much of the way that these children are cared for is governed by bills that become laws and CASA's job on this day is to help legislators understand the challenges of foster care and how we might overcome these challenges with the help of our State Government.

Our job at CASA is to advocate for children in foster care. We do this regularly by getting to know the situations of the individual children that we are appointed to represent and advocating for these children during Court hearings in our local communities. However, legislative advocacy allows us to be agents of change for an even larger outcome. When we represent foster children in front of our legislators there is a real possibility that laws will be changed and that children in foster care will be afforded better care and protection while in the custody of the State of Texas. CASA Day at the Capitol provides another avenue for children's voices to be heard through their CASA Advocates. So, come and join us on February 12th! All are welcome, just contact our office if you'd like to attend!



Above: State Rep. Marsha Farney, poses for a picture with members of CASA for the Highland Lakes Area. Right: Representative Jason Isaac with CASA for the Highland Lakes Area members.



Above: State Representative Jimmie Don Aycock meets with several constituents from CASA for the Highland Lakes Area during CASA Day at the Capitol in 2013.



CASA For the Highland Lakes Area

Date: Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Time: 7:00-9:00 pm

Raise a Glass for CASA

Join CASA for the Highland Lakes at Flat Creek Enoteca for hors d'oeuvres, wine tasting and live music with Bill Rives. All attendees will also receive a Flat Creek Enoteca wine glass.

Tickets \$50 per person.

Flat Creek Enoteca
112 US Hwy 281
Marble Falls, Texas 78654

For Reservations Call: 325-388-3440



Special Announcements

- Please contact the office if you plan to attend CASA Day at the Capitol, as you will need to register. Volunteers will receive 8 hours of in-service training for attending this event!!!!
- Raise a Glass for CASA is scheduled for March 3rd and reservations need to be made by contacting our office, so call today!
- Open House at CASA will be on March 31st and will include food, drinks and door prizes!!!!
- Our next training for new volunteers will begin the week of April 6th. Contact our office to get on the list.
- CASA will host a golf tournament at the Lighthouse Country Club in Kingsland on May 30th, so save the date!!!!

Volunteer Spotlight

Carol has served a total of 5 children in 4 different families since becoming a volunteer advocate in 2011. She also is a member of our Board of Directors and is currently serving as President of the Board.

Carol stated that she first became interested in CASA shortly before moving to Texas in 2010, when she met a lady in Franklin County, Ohio who told her about CASA. She had never heard of CASA before that, but it made such an impression on her that, after moving from Franklin County, Ohio to Texas she called our office as soon as she saw an ad in the paper for a CASA training. We are so lucky she moved to our area!!!!



Carol (far right) representing CASA at the grand opening of the Enoteca in Marble Falls.

Thank you, Carol, for all that you do to help make CASA for the Highland Lakes and the children we serve a success story!!!

Carol reports that the most surprising thing to her about being a volunteer is that at first she was so startled and angry when learning about the stories of the children we serve. However, she now feels that nothing really shocks her anymore, which she describes as a painful thought. She added though, that as volunteers we have to work through our shock and anger in order to continue advocating for these children who count on us!

Something interesting about Carol: She and her family are dual Israeli/American citizens and they all speak Hebrew! She also lived in Israel and 2 of her children were born there!!!



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 Advocates!

Mary Benedict
February 4th

William Bussell
February 23rd

CASA Board of Directors

Carol Leighton, President
Charles Sugg, Vice President

Brenda Durst, Secretary
Trudy Kelley, Treasurer

Jeffery Bartz
Don Cruver
Colleen Davis
Cheryl O'Marley
Vicki Strevey

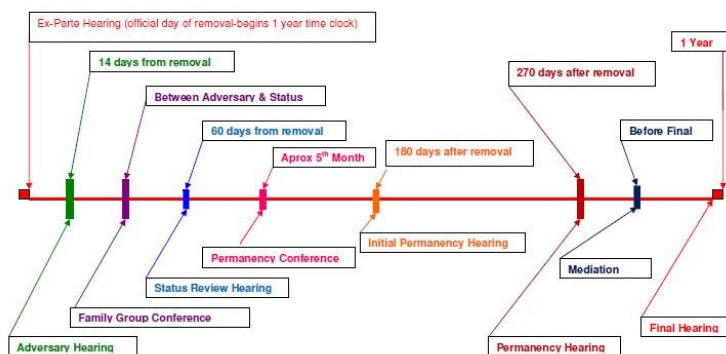
CASA Staff

Kristen Harris, Executive Director
Kathryn Stephenson, Office Manager
Karon Justice, Program Director
Galyn Woerner, Advocate Coordinator
Michele Boshears, Advocate Supervisor
Beverly Bowmaster, Advocate Supervisor
Glenda Hartman, Advocate Supervisor
Amy Masuda, Advocate Supervisor

- For this applause, we are recognizing **Mary Beth Read**. **Mary Beth** has done some fierce advocacy for a child that she is representing and recently this case went to mediation. Because of **Mary Beth's** hard work and dedication to her CASA child, **Mary Beth's** desired outcome for the child was achieved and this child is now in her permanent and forever home! Way to go, **Mary Beth**, and thanks for seeing your vision through to the end!!!!
- We also would like to give a big round of applause to **Chris Bussell** who helped Galyn update our new website. **Chris** spent nearly 2 hours at the CASA office helping Galyn and our new website is looking great! Go check it out at www.highlandlakescasa.com! It's a work in progress, but progress is being made! Let us know if you have any suggestions and, once again, THANK YOU **CHRIS**!!!!
- Although **Terri Mathews** is not one of our advocates, she volunteers at our office each and every week. Because of her dedication to CASA, we'd like to give **Terri**, a big round of applause! She is such a huge help with paperwork and we can count on her every Tuesday afternoon! Thank you, **Terri**, for being so dedicated to our program!
- Thank you also to **Jaycee Lewis**, **Paula McGregor** and **Don Cruver** for agreeing to help us with our new volunteer recruitment committee! These advocates share our dedication to recruiting new volunteers throughout all 5 counties that we serve! Please contact our office if you are interested in learning more about this committee and the possibility of joining us in our efforts to have a volunteer advocate for every child in our area!!!!

Tip From the Trainer - Legal Timeline for CASA Cases:

Mandated One-Year Hearing Timeline





CASA For the Highland Lakes Area

Thank You to All of Our Donors!!!! With Special Thanks to the Following:

**Jeffery Nissen
W.J. McCool
Don Cruver
William King
Jeanie Cowden
Burnet Presbyterian Church
Carol Parker
Juli Gilson
Anonymous
Hal and Sue Harton
Llano Chuckwagon Club
Toby McWilliams
Sunrise Beach Federated Church
Cheryll Mabray
Christ Redeemer Fellowship - Marble Falls
The Church at Horseshoe Bay
Robert Ruff and The Sovren Group in Marble Falls**

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!!

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.