



# The CASA Voice

## CASA: Putting Children First October 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:

**197**

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

**73**

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

Blanco - 12

Burnet - 63

Lampasas - 41

Llano - 51

San Saba - 30

### Headline Story: October is National Bullying Prevention and Awareness Month: Bullying and How it Relates to Foster Youth

### Calendar of Events

- **October 15th:**  
In-service for  
volunteers, 2-4pm.  
The topic is sexual  
assault and domestic  
violence. (see pg. 5 for  
more information).
- **October 24th:** Offroad  
Zomboree Fundraiser  
(more info on pg. 4)
- **November 5th-7th:**  
Texas CASA  
Conference.
- **November 14th:**  
Adoption Day in  
Burnet, TX.
- **December 5th:**  
Christmas Party for  
the CASA kids.



What can we do to help prevent bullying amongst our youth? Find out more on page 2 of this issue.

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More about the Offroad Zomboree Fundraiser on page 4.



**Interested in supporting CASA?  
Here are just a few ways to help:**

1. Volunteer
2. Help us spread the word about our volunteer program.
3. Donate items from our wish list or make a monetary donation to CASA.
4. Help us with a fundraiser.
5. Consider serving on our board of directors. Contact the office for more information.

**The Texas CASA Conference is occurring November 5th through the 7th. CASA staff will be attending, so our office will be closed on Thursday, November 5th and Friday, November 6th. We will return to the office on November 9th!!**

**October is National Bullying Prevention and Awareness Month: Bullying and How it Relates to Foster Youth - A Message from National CASA**

October is National Bullying Prevention/Awareness Month and it's a good time for schools, communities, districts, states, and foster parents to take stock of current efforts to reduce and prevent bullying. As an adult in the community, you play an important role in ensuring all children are safe from bullying. Whether you work in law enforcement, mental health services, community or youth organizations, or any other role that works with children, there are resources to help you take action against bullying.

Bullies are present in every school and community, and all children must deal with bullying and teasing from some perspective – if not as the bully, the victim, or both, then as the bystander who witnesses these acts – and they must choose whether and how to respond. For children involved in the child welfare system, bullying and teasing may not only be a more prevalent, constant, and serious problem, but they may have fewer supports available to help them deal with these issues.

It's important to discuss bullying in relation to foster children due to the risk factors of bullying and why it occurs in school and in the community.

**Bullying Risk Factors**

Children are bullied when they are perceived to be different from their peers. Other factors that may bring about unwanted attention from a bully include:

- New student
- Special needs
- Appearance of low self-esteem
- Appearance as an easy prey
- Less popular or have few friends
- Annoying or bugs other children for attention

Upon reading, these risk factors could also define a high percentage of foster children. When a foster child enters a new foster home they are usually new students at the school, so will have few friends, and may have low self-esteem due to abuse or neglect which also adds to the appearance of being easy prey. Many foster children have special needs. It's also not unusual for foster children to have poor social skills and so may have habits others find annoying or that bother other children.

Having these risk factors does not mean a child will be bullied. It's just that these present the right conditions for a bully to take advantage of the situation. The sad truth is that foster children seem to enter a new school presenting with a number of factors that put them at risk to be bullied. Foster children have enough in their lives to worry about besides adding on the stress of a bully.

**Signs of Bullying**

If the risk factors of bullying seem familiar to foster parents, the list of signs of being bullied will also. Again, to learn more about these risk factors visit [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov).

- Unexplained injuries
- Lost or destroyed items or clothing
- Change in eating habits, such as coming home from school hungry
- Frequent aches and pains
- Sleep issues or disturbances in sleep such as nightmares
- Declining grades
- Loss of friends
- Decreased self-esteem
- Self-destructive behavior, suicidal thoughts, self-harm and running away

Experienced foster parents know from reading the above list that these signs could also mean that a child is having visits with birth family, is struggling to process the trauma of being removed from the home, or process the abuse and neglect that brought them into care.

# CASA For the Highland Lakes Area



## CASA Wish List

Visa Gift Cards for  
Teens in Care

Paper Products

Snack Items

Table Top Podium

Conference Table

Used Jet Ski

Trailers - 2 trailers  
in good condition for  
mobile billboards  
that we plan to have  
made.

See full wish list on  
our website!



In-service Training  
this month is on  
October 15th from  
2-4PM at our office.

Captain Gary  
Boshears with  
Granite Shoals PD  
will be training us  
on the topic of  
sexual assault and  
domestic violence.  
You don't want to  
miss this training!

## CASA Happenings!!!!!!



Left: CASA staff and volunteers attended a training on secondary trauma. Speaker Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky was brought in to teach about the topic by the Hill Country Children's Advocacy Center and their partnership with Perpetual Resonance out of Austin. CASA staff is planning a book club to discuss Laura's book, Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide for Caring for Self While Caring for Others, so stay tuned!!!

Right: Assistant County Attorney, Katherine McAnally, and CASA Staff, Galyn Woerner, spoke on the Ed and Kay morning show at KBEY about our upcoming fundraiser, the Offroad



## CASA for the Highland Lakes Area FY2016 Board of Directors

Colleen Davis - President

Cheryl O'Marley - Vice President

Trudy Kelley Holden - Treasurer

Don Cruver - Secretary

Chuck Lacallade - Legal Counsel

Charles Sugg

Vicki Strevey

J.P. Wilson

### Advisory Board

Wayne Anderson

Jeffrey Bartz

Brenda Durst

Carol Leighton

Herb and Doris Lewis

Peggy Jones





# CASA For the Highland Lakes Area

## CASA CORNER

This section provides great ideas for crafting with the kids in your lives, whether that's your CASA kid, or another special child!

### CASA FACT

Last year CASA volunteers contributed 5.7 million hours of service, equal to \$285 Million in taxpayer dollars, if compensated!!! CASA saves taxpayers a lot of money! If you are curious to learn more about this, ask us! We would be happy to share with you how CASA is changing lives and contributing to the stability of our local economy, all at the same time!!!



Left: Make a leaf bowl with your child by helping them pick out leaves and gluing them to a balloon. Then, once the leaves are dry, let them pop the balloon and they will be delightfully surprised by the pretty bowl they've made!!!!

Right: Pick out pears and trace the letters on each pear. Then let your child place whole cloves on top of the traced letters to spell out a holiday message!



## Upcoming Events

**Registration Fee \$85**  
**PER VEHICLE FOR THE ENTIRE WEEKEND**  
**— BEGINS FRIDAY —**  
**TO INCLUDE CAMPING. TICKETS SOLD AT**  
**HIDDEN FALLS ENTRANCE.**

**Fish Fry Dinner**  
**ON SATURDAY NIGHT AT 6PM.**  
**\$15 PER PERSON — INCLUDES 1 RAFFLE TICKET —**  
**RAFFLE TICKETS \$5 EACH OR 5 FOR \$20**

**OFFROAD ZOMBOREE**  
**OCTOBER 23-25, 2015**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
**325.388.3440**

**BENEFITING CASA FOR THE HIGHLAND LAKES AREA**

**HOSTED BY**  
**HF**  
**HIDDEN FALLS**  
**Adventure Park**

The OffRoad Zomboree is scheduled for October 23rd through October 25th at Hidden Falls Adventure Park in Marble Falls, TX. This event is all weekend long, but day passes are available. The weekend will also include a Fish Fry benefiting CASA for the Highland Lakes Area on Saturday at 6:00PM. Tickets to the dinner are being sold separately and if you are interested in attending the dinner only, please contact our office and we will get you your dinner tickets. During the dinner on Saturday there will be a raffle and an auction as well. Items available include a spray-in bedliner, a pistol and gun club membership to Copperhead Creek Shooting Club, a membership to Hidden Falls Adventure Park, tires, tool sets and other offroad enthusiast items.

**Thank you to Hidden Falls Adventure Park for helping us make this fundraiser happen!**

# 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 Volunteers and Staff!



**Sandra Chapman**  
October 6th

**Mayrean  
McDonough**  
October 6th

**Galyn Woerner**  
October 6th

**Jacy Lewis**  
October 10th

**Donald Cruver**  
October 10th

**Vicki Strevey**  
October 15th

**Cynthia Turner**  
October 16th

**Cindy Lomicka**  
October 19th

**Debbie Kane**  
October 21st

**Michele Boshears**  
October 29th

- Our first applause goes to **April Bergstrom**. **April** is an amazing advocate. She has multiple cases and one of them has been particularly challenging. Abuse was suspected and **April** has been working closely with the caregivers and the child to make sure that she gets the therapy she needs. The child has now made an outcry, and **April's** dedicated efforts helped to make sure the child's therapeutic needs were being addressed. **April** has a great relationship with the CPS caseworker and by working together, they have made sure that orders are in place to protect the child from further abuse. This has been a very emotional process for the child's support team, but **April** always handles things with a high degree of professionalism and effort for a successful outcome. Oh, and did we mention that the children are placed hours away? And she still sees them at least every 6 weeks and stays in constant touch with the caregiver, teachers, therapists, and the support team. Way to go, **April**!
- Our next applause goes out to **Jimmie Rushing**! **Jimmie** is advocating for a 17 year-old male who is severely mentally challenged. He is about to turn 18 and CPS has been struggling with where to move him. He has to go to a home through the Department of Aging and Disability Services now that he is almost a legal adult and where they were going to put him suddenly became unavailable. **Jimmie** found a home, suggested it to CPS and now that is the placement this young man will be going to. It is a home he is familiar with because they have provided respite care for him in the past!! Way to go, **Jimmie**, for advocating for an appropriate placement for this young man and ensuring it was one that he is comfortable with!!!!
- Let us also give a round of applause to **Mike Lubawski**! **Mike** has been working multiple CASA cases and always goes above and beyond the call of duty. A couple of weeks ago **Mike** testified in a termination trial on behalf of 2 of his CASA kids and he did an excellent job! This is never an easy task, but **Mike** handled the situation perfectly and the outcome was one that **Mike** should be proud of. Thanks, **Mike**, for always representing your CASA kids with such dedication!!!
- One more applause is in order.... **Cindy Lomicka** has been doing a great job advocating for her 2 CASA kids. However, she graciously agreed to also help us around the office with some data entry that we've gotten behind on. Thank you, **Cindy**, for helping us with this daunting, but very necessary task!!!

## Special Announcements

- On October 15th join us for in-service training at the CASA office from 2-4pm. Captain Gary Boshears with Granite Shoals Police Dept. will provide training on the topic of sexual assault and domestic violence. You don't want to miss this training!
- If you wish to support CASA for the Highland Lakes, monetarily, it is now easier than ever! You can simply make a donation with your credit or debit card on our website at <http://highlandlakescasa.com/ways-help/donate/>. If every person in our 5 county service area donated just \$10 to CASA we could provide advocacy for over 800 children in foster care!!!!!! Check out our website for other ways to get involved with CASA for the Highland Lakes Area as well!



## CASA For the Highland Lakes Area

### 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!!!!**

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

**Flat Creek Enoteca - Marble Falls**

**Sovren Group - Marble Falls**

**Christ Redeemer Fellowship Church - Marble Falls**

**Trinity Episcopal Church - Marble Falls**

**The Church at Horseshoe Bay - Horseshoe Bay**

**Cheryll Mabray**

**Hal and Sue Harton**

One-time and recurring donations can also be made on our website at  
<http://highlandlakescasa.com/ways-help/donate/>

### **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](mailto: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.