



Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

KEARNEY BUFFALO COUNTY CASA

Holiday NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to Our New Staff,
Kelly Jensen

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA is pleased to announce the addition of our third Volunteer Supervisor! Kelly has been a CASA volunteer for a little over three years. She has been a stay at home mom for the past 12 years to her 5 kids and loves helping her husband, Kyle, on the family farm north of Minden. Prior to that, she was a 911 dispatcher for 3 counties. Kelly is excited to take on this new role in her life, and is embracing it as her own. She brings her own personal experience, and new creative and innovative ideas to the position, and we are happy to have her as part of our team!



MEET OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS!



October 2016 Class

Top Left: Amber Spring of
Kearney. Bottom left: Lisa
McGuire of Kearney. Bridget
Limbach of Kearney, Jackie
Donoghue of Holdrege, Jordan
Smith of Kearney, and
Christy Bochart of Loup City.



Meet our new volunteers! These fabulous volunteers were sworn in following a 30 hour training. As part of their training, they learned about the CPS and court processes, cultural diversity, understanding Child Abuse and Neglect, family strengths, stress in families, risk factors for abuse and neglect, Impact of mental illness/domestic violence/Substance Abuse to children and families, Poverty, Child Development, Attachment and separation, Understanding Confidentiality, Investigation, Community Resources, Writing CASA reports, Appearing in court, and Monitoring a case.



January 2017 Class

Left:
Karl Borg of Holdrege

Right:
Robert Hobbs
of Kearney



December Volunteer of the Month: Ashley Whitley

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA is proud to honor Ashley Whitley of Kearney for her advocacy for abused and neglected children. Ashley approaches her case with an open mind. She is dedicated, flexible, and works very well with the team to make sure that the children's best interests are pursued and are a priority. Not only is Ashley a fantastic advocate for children, she also works very hard on the CASA Recruiting Committee to help our CASA team grow.

"Why I chose to become a CASA Volunteer - I decided to become a CASA Volunteer because child welfare is an area that I am so passionate about. I know that having a CASA on a case means that the

youth have at least one person in their corner; fighting for them and with them. I think it is so important to support these children because lots of them do get lost in the system and they are our future. It would be selfish of me if I didn't put my social work education and passion for children to good use by volunteering my time to better the youth and their experience with the system. I know that there are so many children that would benefit from having a CASA volunteer and I encourage anyone that has a love for children and any spare time to educate themselves on what being a CASA truly provides for these youth."



January Volunteer of the Month: Misti Schroeder

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA is proud to honor Misti Schroeder of Kearney for her advocacy for abused and neglected children. Misti is a strong advocate and dedicated to advocating for the best interest of her CASA child even when faced with adversity. She is incredibly talented in being real with her CASA family and having the ability to reach them in a way that allows them to understand all that is going on in their case. .

Misti stated, "The reason I chose to become a CASA volunteer- There have been experiences throughout my life that I have found myself in a situation that I could help a child/and or an adult get out of a bad situation or help steer them in the right direction and get them the help they need. I have always been passionate about helping others where and when I could. When I first heard about CASA I didn't have to think twice about

joining. I thought to myself, this is where I'm supposed to be. So I messaged a friend of mine and asked how and where to go to sign up. So many of our children do go unheard and get lost in our system only to be left most times another statistic. If there is just 1 person that can take a few hours out of their already crazy, stressful, busy lives to be there for a child in the foster care system and give them a voice in our court system, and just be there for them to let them know that they do matter to someone, they could change so many lives for the better. So many times we as adults assume we know what's best for our kids, when in fact if we would take the time to listen to our kids we could save them from the abuse and neglect and give them a happy home, a place to always call home. Besides being a mother and step-mother of 5 amazing children, CASA is the most



rewarding journey I have done in my life thus far. There are still more children in our area that desperately need a CASA Volunteer. I encourage anyone to take some time out of their own lives and go through the training and become a voice for our children; they deserve to have someone in their corner. After all, they didn't ask to be put into the system."

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA is proud to honor Barb Icenogle of Kearney for her advocacy for abused and neglected children. Barb has been a committed advocate for 7 months. Barb spent her career as a science teacher for Kearney Public Schools. As a CASA volunteer, she visits the children, attends team meetings, goes to court, and writes a report for the judge.

“I love being a CASA because I get to work with a team of professionals, while getting the support I need from my CASA supervisor, and it is all focused on helping children and their families in our area.”

CASA Supervisor, Melanie Lewis, says “Barb has been a valuable member of the team on her case. She has earned the respect of everyone involved, and really listens to the family and the children. Barb really stays involved with these children, and looks out for their best interests. Congratulations, Barb! We are proud of you!”



CEU CENTRAL

Each year our CASA volunteers are required to complete 12 CEU's or continuing education units. Our fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th. The following volunteers have worked hard and earned their CEU's for this year are:

Tiffany Coufal

Jean Kolbo

Ramona Sexson

Dorothy Feese

Diana Luscher

Robert Hobbs

Misti Schroeder

RESOURCE CENTER

Early Development Network
Central Health Center
Region 3 Behavioral Health
Early Steps: Bright Futures
Family Engagement Center
Right Turn
S.A.F.E. Center
Nebraska Appleseed
Project Help: CCC
Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska
Project Everlast
R.A.F.T.
Bridge to Independence
P.A.L.S. Program
Center for Psychological Services
Boys Town
South Central Behavioral Services
Through the Eyes of the Child Initiative
Lutheran Family Services

Compass
Family Advocacy Network
Salvation Army
United Way
Crossroads
Goodwill Industries
Vocational Rehabilitation
W.I.C
Habitat for Humanity
Legal Aid
Collage Center
Nebraska Children's Home
Wholeness Healing Center

Information on all of
these Resources and
many more, are
available in our
office!

Upcoming New Volunteer Trainings:

Kearney

March 2017

For an application, call 308-865-5675!



KEEP
CALM
AND
Be An
Advocate

Jackie Donoghue: Heart of CASA



When we heard about the passing of Jacquelyn “Jackie” Donoghue (December 15, 1942-January 6, 2017) the staff at Kearney/Buffalo County CASA wanted to reflect on this special CASA volunteer.

Jackie was a force of nature. It only took a few minutes to realize what a powerhouse this petite, somewhat frail woman actually was. Jackie was a fierce advocate for children. She was also an advocate for our organization. She was willing to do whatever she could do to help

CASA get more volunteers to help more children. She didn’t care if that meant being silly by dancing in a flash mob or riding a float in a parade, or wearing a silly hat. She never shied away from taking yet another case, even though she knew it was going to take a little piece of her heart. She had learned that the rewards of volunteering were greater than the sacrifices involved, and she gave of herself willingly.

Jackie was so frustrated that the child welfare system can be inefficient. But in her heart, she was an optimist who believed in the power of change. She believed that one person can make a difference. In the end, that is what CASA is all about. And we will carry Jackie’s spirit with us always.



March 18th @ 7:05pm
Storm vs. Muskegon

CASA Storm Hockey Fundraiser

Adults-\$14

Kids-\$5

CASA Receives \$5 per every adult ticket sold.

To purchase tickets: Tru Café, CASA Office,
and Saylor Printing

Tickets will be available at Will Call.

Free Skating After the Hockey Game!

CASA BIRTHDAYS

January

Matt Mueller
Cody Dvorak
Misti Schroeder
Robert Zuehlsdorf

Barbara Icenogle

Tim Peterson

Lisa Tolles

April

Rita Skiles
Kathleen McAdams
Kathryn Gifford
Deb Woollen

February

McKenna Peplinski
Josseline Gonzalez
Christy Bochart

May

Nicole Peterson
Janna Ingram
Diana Luscher
Ramona Sexson
Jean Kolbo
Courtney Arram
Robert Hobbs
Teresa Carey

March

Ashley Whitley
Will Aviles
Emily Lyons

June

Ron Eckloff
Shannon Cameron
Angela Gibreal
Connie Choquette
Atricia Kenagy
Linda Martin
Andrea Potthoff



KEARNEY/BUFFALO COUNTY CASA PRESENTS

MEN *In Tights*

MISS CASA 2017

YOUNES CONFERENCE CENTER

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24

PRE-SHOW 6:00 DINNER & CONTEST 6:30

A satirical beauty contest featuring male professionals from the area competing in evening wear and talent.

Thanks to our Platinum Sponsors,

The Anram Family Foundation

Sorensen Group Inc.

Younes Hospitality

Tickets- \$50

PURCHASE TICKETS AT:

JOY'S FLORAL- MINDEN

TRU CAFÉ- KEARNEY

MID-NEBRASKA COMMUNITY

SERVICES- KEARNEY



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

Contestants in the Race for Miss CASA 2017!!

Kirk Peterson

Sponsored by A&M Ag

Danny Graves

Sponsored by Cunninghams

Jarvis Kring

Sponsored by Minden Exchange Bank & Trust Company

Tanner Follett

Sponsored by Ward Labs

Jason Tira

Sponsored by Wood River Dairy

Jason Owens

Sponsored by BD Construction

Joel Korth

Sponsored by First Bank and Trust Company

Travis Gregg

Sponsored by Kearney Regional Center

John Biever

Sponsored by Krull Agency

Ryan Carson

Sponsored by Jacobsen-Orr Law Firm

Matt Huffman

Sponsored by Five Point Bank

Mark Meyer

Sponsored by Midway Auto

CASA Volunteers!!

New West and Dent Popper donated 22 event tickets to any CASA volunteer that is able to attend the Men In Tights Event.

The first 22 CASA Volunteers that let their supervisor know they WILL attend for sure, will get 1 event ticket.

This is another way of letting our CASA volunteers know how grateful we are to having them be in the front line serving children. You are the heart of our CASA program and we want to say thank you for all you do.



LIVE UNITED



United Way
of the Kearney Area

Did you Know....

That The American Red Cross provides free smoke alarm installation services?

*The Red Cross also provides specialized bedside alarms for individuals who are deaf and or hard of hearing.

*Preparedness Saves Lives

To ensure you have smoke alarms and your home is prepared, contact

Vicki Halligan

Community Volunteer Leader

E-mail: vickih@cozadtel.net

Phone: 402/429-3963

1610 C Street

Cozad, NE 69130

RedCross.org

Redcross.org/homefire



**American
Red Cross**

Upcoming Events:

February 20

President's Day (Office Closed)

February 24

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA Men In Tights

March 17

Phelps/Harlan County CASA Men In Tights

March 18

Storm Hockey and CASA fundraiser-Storm Vs. Muskegon

April 22

Nebraska CASA Conference-Scottsbluff

Quarter Happenings

Children served:	112	<u>Children's Age Range</u>	# of Volunteers:	59
Cases Closed:	24	0-5=56	# of New Volunteers:	9
Waitlist:	66	6-11=43	Hours our volunteers put in:	1,305
		12-15=20	Miles driven by our Volunteers:	13,631
		16-17=6		
		18+=4		

<u>Volunteers time w/ CASA</u>	<u>Ages of Volunteers</u>	<u>Type of Cases</u>
< 1 year: 14	21-29=4	Neglect: 117
1 year: 12	30-39=8	Physical Abuse: 7
2 years: 7	40-49=8	Sexual Abuse: 2
3 years: 5	50-59=4	Other: 3
4 years: 1	60+=18	
5 years: 5		

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Kearney, NE 68848**

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Fax: 308-865-9202**

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kearneybuffalocasa1@mnca.net**

**Margot - Ext. 115
CASA@mnca.net**

**Melanie- Extension 134
kearneybuffalocasa2@mnca.net**

**Kelly- Extension 146
casa2@mnca.net**

Kearney/Buffalo Co. CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates are appointed by the Court judge to represent the best interest of abused and neglected children in the court system. A CASA volunteer acts as the "eyes and ears" of children involved in court proceedings, and offer judges a critical perspective of what is in the best interests of each child, based on information gathered first-hand through research, interviews, and observations. Studies show that once a CASA volunteer is assigned to an abused or neglected child that the child is much more likely to receive vital services such as health care, education, and therapy. By getting involved as a CASA, you can help create healthier families and communities - and change the course of a child's life.

Follow us:

Website: <http://kearneybuffalocountycasa.com/>

Facebook: Kearney/Buffalo County CASA

Twitter: @KBCASA



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