

KEARNEY/ BUFFALO

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

Men In Tights

New Volunteers

Upcoming New
Volunteer Training

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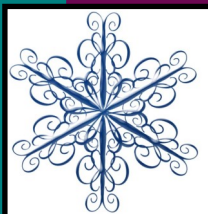
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KEARNEY BUFFALO COUNTY

CASA *Winter* NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2015-2016

3rd Annual Men in Tights

February 25th, 2016

Featuring special guest, Governor Ricketts will be joining us!

Tickets can be purchased at the Tru Café in Kearney or Joys Floral in Minden. Tickets can also be purchased from the Kearney/Buffalo County Staff, Board members, Resource Committee members, and volunteers!

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA
presents
the 3rd Annual
MEN IN TIGHTS
Gala
JOIN IN THE FUN

GREAT ENTERTAINMENT
to help kids in need

Thursday February 25, 2016
6:00 PM PRE-SHOW 6:30 PM DINNER & CONTEST
Younes Conference Center

Tickets
For Tickets Call | 308.865.5675 Ext. 115
Tickets may be purchased for \$50 at Tru Cafe 2100 Central Ave., Kearney
or Joy's Floral & Gifts 302 East 5th St., Minden

A satirical beauty contest featuring male personalities from the area
competing in evening wear and talent with hopes of being crowned

Miss **CASA 2016**

Thank You
To Our Sponsors

ARRAM FAMILY
FOUNDATION

Younes
CONFERENCE CENTER



Meet your Kearney Public Schools Social Workers

The School Social Workers in Kearney Public Schools are licensed mental health professionals with a master's degree in clinical social work. School Social Workers have been in Kearney Public Schools for seven years.



Brenda Bierbower, LMHP, LCSW serves Central, Buffalo Hills, and Meadowlark Elementary.

brenda.bierbower@kearneypublic.org



Niki Peterson, LMHP, LCSW serves at Bryant Elementary, Kenwood Elementary, Park Elementary, and Windy Hills Elementary.

nicole.peterson@kearneypublic.org



Lori McArthur, LMHP, LCSW serves Northeast Elementary, Emerson, and Glenwood Elementary.

lori.mcarthur@kearneypublic.org

Snapshot of 1/1/2015-1/1/2016

Children served: 157
Cases Closed: 63
Waitlist: 67

Number of Volunteers: 63
Number of New Volunteers: 18
Hours our volunteers put in: 3,720
Miles driven by our Volunteers: 45,246

Volunteers Age Range

21-40 years of age: 13
40-60 years of age: 26
60 years of age & up: 24

Volunteers Length of time with CASA

< 1 year: 17
1 year: 18
2 years: 14
3 years: 5
4 years: 3
5 years: 6

Type of Cases

Neglect: 136
Physical Abuse: 26
Sexual Abuse: 5
Other: 3

January, February, and March Birthdays



January

Matthew Mueller
Cody Dvorak
Tim Peterson
Bob Zuehlsdorf

February

Rebekah Mussman
Susan Honeyman
Becky Grimes

March

Joe Hultquist
William Aviles
Emily Lyons

Volunteer of the Month: *November*

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA is proud to honor Kelly Jensen of Minden as Volunteer of the Month for November. Kelly Jensen is a homemaker who has advocated for abused and neglected children for 2 years. She has always gone above and beyond to familiarize herself with case details, to help connect children and families with needed resources, and to make sure the child finds a safe, permanent home as soon as possible. Kelly says "I am a victim and survivor of child abuse myself. Everyone knew about it, but never said or did anything to protect me. When I heard about CASA first coming to Kearney County, it always had a place in my heart where I wanted to be involved. Once my kids got into school full-time, I

took the training and am now on my third case over the past 2 years. I encourage everyone to look deep within themselves to become a voice for these children and go through the training to become a CASA advocate, to make a difference in a child's life".



December Volunteer of the Month

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA is proud to honor Tim Peterson of Kearney for his excellence and dedication to the Kearney/Buffalo County CASA Program. Tim has always been willing to go above and beyond to familiarize himself with case details and advocate for abused and neglected children and their best interest. Not only is he dedicated to the children, he is active on our resource committee

and works hard to ensure advertising goes smoothly and is done well.

Tim says, "I have strong feelings for the underdog. Especially under privileged children. There's a gratification for helping those who need it. Being a CASA Volunteer has helped me realize I have a gift to share with others."



January Volunteer of the Month

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA is proud to honor Will Aviles of Kearney for his advocacy for abused and neglected children. Will approaches every case with an open mind and approaches advocacy from a strengths based approach. He develops great rapport with the children and engages with all of the individuals involved in the child's life to make sure he has a complete picture of the child's life and best interests. Will says, "I originally became a CASA because I felt that I had lived too many years in Kearney without doing more for a community that I consider my home. CASA is also a good fit with

my general worldview in that it is focused upon supporting children and parents who lack many of the options that I was fortunate to have. I have been amazed at the diverse roles that CASAs play as volunteers such as regular conversations with children, therapists, parents, and foster parents. In addition, writing court reports, meeting with case workers and reviewing case plans and judicial rulings. Of course, there are also snow ball fights, climbing trees, running in parks, playing "cookie monster", reading stories or having a group of children take you by the hand to see a sunset from their backyard."





Ashley Whitley of Kearney

Meet Our New Volunteers!

Each new volunteer underwent a rigorous screening process including an application, an interview, 3 reference checks, and a thorough background check to confirm that they will be dedicated and appropriate CASA volunteers. Then our fearless class underwent the 30 hour training covering everything from their role as a CASA to the impact of addiction on families to the juvenile court process to child development to court report writing and dozens of other relevant and diverse topics. These brave new CASA's will be officially sworn in by the Judge on February 10, 2016.



Josseline Gonzalez of Kearney

Upcoming New Volunteer Training:

Holdrege

Begins March 2016

For an application, call 308-865-5675!





Katie McAdams of Kearney

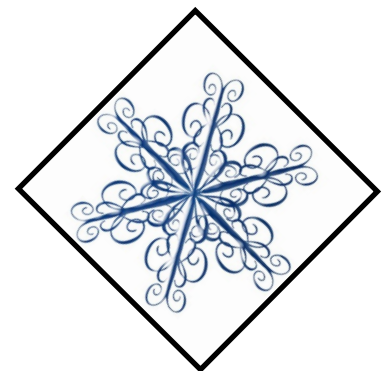
Lisa Tolles of Pleasanton



Volunteers with at least 12 CEUs this fiscal year

***Cameron Shannon
Shawntel Daniell
Cody Dvorak
Juliane Jefferis-Fitch
Susan Honeyman
Connie Larsen
Nicole Peterson
Bob Zuehlsdorf
Kathryn Gifford
Andrea Potthoff
Roberta Loescher***

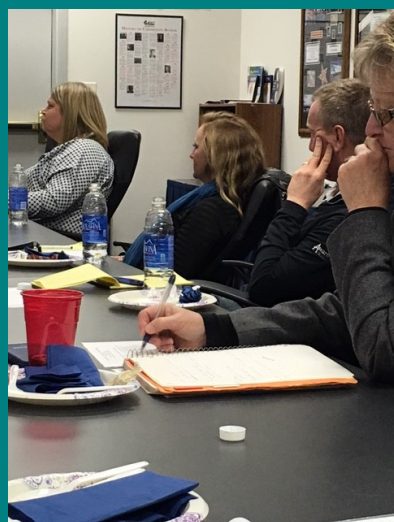
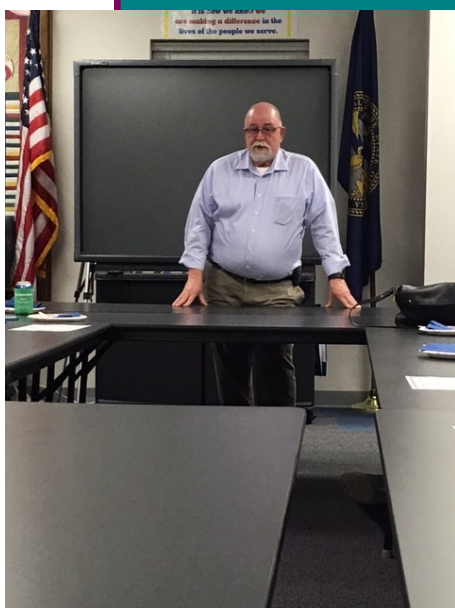
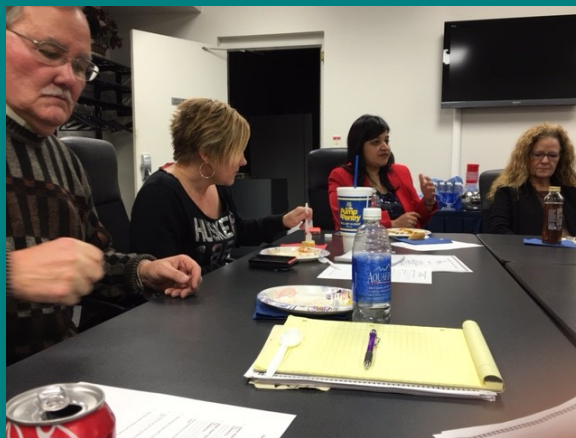
All our volunteers are required to get 12 continuing education credits each fiscal year. Our fiscal year runs from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. Thanks to all our volunteers who are ahead of the game and already have all their CEUs nailed down for this fiscal year!





Buffalo County Drug Court & Potluck

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA held an In-service training on January 28, 2016. Guest speaker, Honorable John P. Icenogle spoke to our volunteers about the Buffalo County Drug Court program. Randy "Buzz" Sawyer from the Kearney Probation Office talked about drug testing and how those are conducted.





The Glass Castle is a memoir written by Jeannette Walls about her life and family as a child. She writes about her charismatic father, who, when sober, would teach them many different studies including physics, geology, and how to embrace life fearlessly. But when he drank, he was dishonest and destructive. She describes her mother as a free spirit who didn't want the responsibility of raising a family. The Walls children learned how to care for themselves. They fed, clothed, and looked after one another. Eventually, they found their way to New York. Their parents followed by chose to remain homeless as their children prospered.

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Program Memo: Family Team Meetings

Members of the family team meetings are identified by the family. In court-involved cases, the CFSS will work with the family to include legal parties as well as the children's caretaker in the family team meetings. The family may elect to have the foster family or other meeting participants attend part of the meeting based upon the information and planning to be shared and discussed.

Frequency of team meetings are established by the team based upon the needs of the family and progress toward achieving child safety, permanency and well-being. To maintain steady progress, Family Team Meetings should occur monthly.

Critical decisions which would necessitate a family team meeting include:

- Developing the initial case plan

- Updating the case plan and the permanency goal

- Prior to a removal of a child from home, or as soon as possible after an emergency removal

- Prior to a change in permanency objective

- Prior to returning a child home

- Prior to case closure

- Upon request of the family

The family team may also identify critical times unique to the family circumstances when a family team meeting needs to be held.

The CFSS will coordinate with the family to establish the date, time, and location, members to attend the meeting and agenda. The CFSS will send out the meeting invitation including the agenda and relevant information.



Kearney/Buffalo Co. CASA

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Claire - Extension 134
kearneybuffalococasa2@mnca.net
Christina - Extension 117
kearneybuffalococasa1@mnca.net
Fax: 308-865-9202

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:

<http://kearneybuffalocountycasa.com/>

Facebook: Kearney/Buffalo County CASA

Twitter: @KBCASA

Meet our Board Members

David Hoyt~ *President*

Delvin Schmidt~ *Vice President*

Linda Ard~ *Secretary / Treasurer*

Nicole Mailahn

Joe Hultquist

Dr. David Benevides

Beci Vanfossen

Carol Dart

Catherine Johnson

Christina McIntire

Cody Dvorak



LOOKING FOR

A VOLUNTEER TO VIDEO RECORD OUR UPCOMING ANNUAL MEN IN TIGHTS! IF INTERESTED, CONTACT US AT 308-865-5675