

CASA of DuPage County, Inc.  
 505 North County Farm Road, 3rd Floor, Suite C, Wheaton Illinois 630-221-0889

# The CASA Link

April 2008

## Note from Kay



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The month of April is a very important month for CASA of DuPage County, for several reasons:

**The anniversary of our founding.** On April 13, 1993 a formal agreement recognizing CASA of DuPage County was signed by then Chief Judge Anthony M. Peccarelli. We began serving the court and the first year served 33 children with the assistance of 15 sworn volunteers. Many of you are aware that we are busy planning a celebration of our first fifteen years. The events theme is “CASAs Caring Hearts”, recognizing that we could not do what we do without the dedication and caring hearts of our sworn volunteers. Please join us for an evening of recognition, fun, music, magic and silent auction, with a few surprises thrown in at Arrowhead Golf Club, in Wheaton on April 19th. Invitations were mailed out a couple of weeks ago. Tickets are \$100 per person and Joan can assist you with purchasing tickets over the phone if you wish. Sponsorship opportunities are still available; for more information call Christina at the CASA office, ext 308.

**National Volunteer Week is April 27-May 3.** I was recently reminded of a very pertinent quote by Judge Glenda A. Hatchett, a National CASA spokesperson... “It takes all of us, a village of every day people, to stand up and commit to making a meaningful difference in the lives of abused and neglected children, our children. And it starts very simply with one volunteer at a time.” I repeat, we could not do what we do without the dedication and caring hearts of our sworn volunteers, without you we would not exist.



**April is Child Abuse Prevention Month.** Although April is the nationally designated month, we fight against child abuse every month, every day. It is a continual fight. Don't lose sight of the fact that there are many children out there that need our help and we are always working to raise awareness of what we do in this critical fight for our children. To that end we will be hosting our Third Annual CASA Cares 5K Run/Walk on April 27<sup>th</sup> at McCollum Park in Downers Grove. Event day registration and packet pick-up begin at 7:00 a.m., with the race starting at 8:00 a.m. Registration is open online at [www.signmeupsports.com](http://www.signmeupsports.com) or through the event link on our website. Come out and join us!

I will leave you with another quote by John W. Whitehead: “Children are the messages we send to a time we will not see”.  
 Let's all continue to work hard for messages of love and kindness into the future.

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## **In-Service Opportunities**

**Monday, April 7, 2008**

**Do You Know It When You See It?**

10:15 a.m. to 12:00 Noon  
Evangelical Child and Family Agency  
1530 N. Main Street  
Wheaton  
Fee: \$10

Explores the extent of abuse and neglect, and issues surrounding a call to the DCFS Hotline. They include why people do not call; making the call and why it can be difficult; what happens after the call, etc. Opportunity will be provided to apply the mandated reporting role to different programs. To register contact Teri Schuman at [teris@evanfca.org](mailto:teris@evanfca.org) or 630-653-6400 ext. 235.

**Thursday, April 10, 2008**

**Special Education IEP Issues Solved**

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Precision Education  
5555 Trillium Blvd.  
(NIU Hoffman Estates Campus)  
Hoffman Estates  
Fee: \$12

Teachers and parents will discover special education solutions that work to maximize learning in special education. The \$12.00 covers breakfast, lunch, beverages, workshop materials and organization system. To register call 800-432-0170 ext. 0.

**Thursday, April 17, 2008**

**The Effect of Violence and Trauma on Young Children: Contemporary Trends, Issues, Assessment and Intervention**

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Aramark  
Downer's Grove  
Free

This workshop will fill up quickly. To register go to [www.thecenterweb.org/starnet](http://www.thecenterweb.org/starnet) and click on

workshops and print out a registration form . This workshop is also offered on April 18 in Chicago, through STARnet Region V.

**Saturday, April 19, 2008**

**Motherhood and Substance Abuse**

9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Haymarket Center  
932 W. Washington Blvd.  
Chicago  
Fee: \$95.00

This workshop will focus on the impact of substance abuse on a woman's parenting ability. Implications for treatment and parenting practices will be discussed. Breakfast and lunch are included in the fee. To register call 312-226-7984 ext. 314.

**Friday, April 25, 2008**

**Finding and Using the Resources You Need**

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
DePaul University  
Naperville  
Free

This workshop will fill up quickly. To register go to [www.thecenterweb.org/starnet](http://www.thecenterweb.org/starnet) and click on workshops and print out a registration form.

**Tuesday, April 29, 2008**

**Brown Bag Lunch  
Building Rapport With Children**

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
CASA Office

Bring your lunch and join us for a viewing of a National CASA video. This video may also be checked out from the CASA library. Contact Melissa for details at 630-221-0889 ext. 306 or [melissa@dupagecasa.org](mailto:melissa@dupagecasa.org).

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## In-Service Opportunities

**Wednesday, May 14, 2008**  
**DCFS on Foster Home Licensing**  
**and Foster Parent Training**

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
 First Presbyterian Church of Glen Ellyn  
 550 N. Main Street  
 Glen Ellyn  
 Free

John Ellison from DCFS will present this CASA in-service on how foster homes are licensed and foster parents are trained. Contact Melissa at 630-221-0889 ext. 306 or [melissa@dupagecasa.org](mailto:melissa@dupagecasa.org).

**Tuesday, May 27, 2008**  
**Brown Bag Lunch**  
**Family Violence: Children Are**  
**Always the Victims**

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
 CASA Office  
 Free

Bring your lunch and join us for a viewing of a National CASA video on family violence and its effects on children. This video may also be checked out from the CASA library. Contact Melissa for details at 630-221-0889 ext. 306 or [melissa@dupagecasa.org](mailto:melissa@dupagecasa.org).

### ONLINE OPPORTUNITIES

We have mentioned these before, but they bear repeating: A number of fascinating programs are available at [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline). Click on "Explore Video Archive" which is on the lower right hand side of the page. Much additional information is available on each topic – the posted comments are fascinating. It was hard to tear ourselves away – we wanted to watch them all and read the discussions.

Titles include:

- The Medicated Child (children and psychiatric drugs)
- The Meth Epidemic (60 minutes)
- Country Boys (two Appalachian teens becoming men; poverty and family dysfunction: 6 hours in 3 parts)
- Medicating Kids (children and ADHD: 60 minutes)
- Inside the Teenage Brain (60 minutes)
- Failure To Protect (when should a parent lose the right to raise a child?)

### LIBRARY MATERIALS

We have recently purchased some videotapes from the National CASA Association:

- Rapport Building With Children
- Family Violence: Children Are Always The Victim
- Foundation of Attachment: Healing the Wounded Children Part 1
- Foundation of Attachment: Healing the Wounded Children Part 2

These resources are VHS and can be checked out or watched in our office with prior arrangement. Handouts are available to go with the tapes.

### IN-SERVICE YEAR ENDS JUNE 30

Active Advocates are required to complete 12 hours of in-service credit per fiscal year. For those who are working with Older Youth (ages 12 to 18), six of those hours must pertain to issues dealing with that age group. Advocates who are not in compliance may be subject to dismissal, as the in-service standard is set by National CASA. Credits may be obtained by:

- Reading approved books
- Participating in the CASA book club

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## In-Service Opportunities

- Watching related movies or documentaries
- Attending CASA in-services
- Attending outside seminars, lectures or conferences
- Completing on-line opportunities

A calendar of upcoming in-service opportunities is available through the CASA of DuPage website: [www.dupagecasa.org](http://www.dupagecasa.org). Click on Advocate Resources to access the calendar. When viewing the calendar, click on a selected listing for more information. Another format is available by clicking on the Agenda tab on the upper right of the calendar; for additional information click on the selected title. For more information on continuing education, how to use the in-service calendar or for a summary of your in-service hours, please contact Melissa Auer at 630-221-0889 ext. 306 or [melissa@dupagecasa.org](mailto:melissa@dupagecasa.org).

### CASA BOOK CLUB

#### One Small Boat: The Story of a Little Girl, Lost Then Found

by Kathy Harrison

Monday, April 14  
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church  
41 N. Park Blvd.  
Glen Ellyn, IL

“In this heart warming, heart-wrenching book, one small boat makes it into a safe harbor. Others won’t. This is far more than a feel-good read for the sentimentalist. It’s a book to absorb and remember,” states one source.

Daisy was five when she first entered the bustling foster home of Kathy Harrison. Unlike the parents of most of Kathy’s foster children, Daisy’s birth mother wasn’t poor, uneducated, or drug addicted. She just could not take care of a child and the effects of this abandonment

on Daisy were profound. After two weeks in Kathy’s loving home, however, Daisy began to thrive.

Described as an intimate portrait of foster care in America and of the children whose lives are forever shaped by it, One Small Boat considers whether a sense of home and belonging can ever be restored to children after they have been taken away. In this beautifully written book, Kathy Harrison describes the lessons she learned from Daisy, lessons about resilience after heartbreak, courage after fear and the power of love to heal even the deepest wounds.

Kathy Harrison (along with her *very* understanding husband) has fostered hundreds of children and is definitely an American hero disguised as an everyday woman. Her book tells about the small triumphs and not-so-small heartbreaks of foster care and is an invaluable way to let people know the real story about foster care and adoption.

You may be able to find this book at your local library or you can purchase a used copy through Amazon.com. Please read it and join us for a good discussion of the issues involved.

Reading this book and attending the discussion group will count towards 5 in-service credits. Call Melissa at 630-221-0889 ext. 306 for more information or to reserve a spot.



## A Message from Ruth Laughlin

In last quarter's Link, I wrote of dilemmas facing two of my cases. Both of them were due for some degree of resolution shortly after publication of the Link. Many have expressed interest about the outcomes, so here you have them.

To review: case #1 involved a natural father who appeared for the first time 2½ years into the case, subsequent to the natural mother's surrender of her rights and at a hearing where his rights were to be terminated by default. He came in from Minnesota expressly to position himself in the proceedings. Between that hearing (December 18<sup>th</sup>) and the next hearing (January 8<sup>th</sup>), he came to realize that his children's needs would be best met by leaving them alone. On January 8<sup>th</sup>, instead of arguing for standing in the case, he returned from Minnesota to surrender his parental rights. I suspect this guy (like all of us) has done some seriously dumb things in his life, but I will always see an element of hero in him.

On to case #2: this is the 17 year old boy who took exception to his placement in a JSO facility (juvenile sex offender), and who had been placed there because no place else would take him with the angry attitude he displayed during intake interviews. At the January 8<sup>th</sup> hearing, for which CASA had submitted a report in the form of a timeline (which revealed many ways in which this boy had been failed), there was authentically pur-

poseful discussion about the best next step. It was decided that a CAYIT was needed; one was scheduled and occurred within a few weeks.

For those of you who have not attended a CAYIT (child and youth investment team) meeting, the child sits at a conference table with, in this case, about 10 adults, each with an opinion about what should happen. Even at my present age, I'd find the experience daunting. But our boy did us proud. The DCFS representatives really felt he should stay put, as JSO treatment was regarded as the best treatment for his anger issues. This young man held his own, though. He presented his position with an appropriate amount of assertion; he was articulate and candid in his reasons. The result – he made his case and got everyone at the table to concur that his interests would be best served by a move to a new facility which has since happened. Thus far, all is going reasonably well.

He has no idea yet how pivotal to the rest of his life this experience will prove to be. He successfully advocated for himself, justified his reasons, expressed himself well, wasn't dissuaded by the opinions of the experts and learned to trust others to help him, his advocate in particular. He did all these things, instead of defaulting entirely to anger, truly many huge steps. It's a joy to behold.

## How Are The Children?

Attending a National CASA Conference is guaranteed to get you fired up – so whether you are a seasoned volunteer or a rookie, you will find something to excite you. Just being in one spot with hundreds of other like minded people is an energizing experience. Members of the CASA of DuPage staff will be attending the 2008 Conference and hope that you, too, will consider going.

Registration is currently underway for the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual National CASA Conference, to be held on June 7-10, 2008, at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington D.C. Attendees may choose from pre-conference institutes, learning intensives and more than 60 conference workshops that offer

substantive and relevant information as well as opportunities to gain new skills.

Four designated workshop tracks – Fundraising; Public Policy; Volunteer Skills and Resources; and Cultural Competency – help guide participants' workshop selections. *CASA Meets Congress* will be held on June 10, providing an opportunity to share the CASA message with our nation's leaders, attend a legislative briefing and orientation followed by state caucus meetings, lunch and a reception on Capitol Hill. More information on the conference and *CASA Meets Congress* is available on the National CASA Website or at [www.casanet.org/conference](http://www.casanet.org/conference).

## All in the Family

Hello, this is Christina Thomas! The newest addition to the CASA crew! I am so excited to be a part of CASA I'm not sure where to begin my story! I was born and raised in Mequon, Wisconsin. I was very active in sports throughout my childhood, and at the tender age of two, I was enrolled in my first dance class. Dance became my life and it's what brought me to the Windy City! I attended Columbia College as a dance major for two years and enjoyed living in the city. That's when life started to change. . .I could not help but want to learn everything that came my way. I began working at a family owned hair salon, and progressed to manager within months! I then moved on to a corporately owned Day Spa and continued managing for 3 years. Throughout those years I worked vigorously to promote the spa through hosting events to drive sales and building our client base. Though working in a spa has wonderful benefits, I did not feel this was the right place for me; I wanted more. I wanted a new challenge and I wanted to continue event planning. Along came CASA to my rescue!

The passion I have for children has grown throughout the years. While pursuing my dance career, I was a dance educator for 6 years, committed to involving dance in children's lives. Dance can offer many escapes from the chaos of life. I also have intentions to finish school with hopes of pursuing a career in nutrition and early childhood development.

CASA is a new challenge. I intend to learn as much as I can and work as hard as I can to keep this organization strong! I am not shy, and I love to meet new people!! I hope to see you around!

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*Our lives begin to end the day we  
become silent about things that  
matter.*

*~Martin Luther King*

## Events

### CASA's Caring Hearts 15th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, April 19<sup>th</sup>

Join CASA on April 19<sup>th</sup> at Arrowhead Golf Club in Wheaton for an evening of celebration: a delectable cuisine, music compliments of Johnny B's Entertainment, and *watch out for fire*, magician Adam Sean will be attending! The festivities will begin at 6:00 with cocktails and silent auction. While enjoying dinner, our guests will be treated with a special performance from **Kidz Kabaret**, "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown". So, make your reservation and get ready for a night of excitement! Sponsorship opportunities are still available. Please contact Christina at [Chrisina@dupagecasa.org](mailto:Chrisina@dupagecasa.org) or by phone 630-221-0889 ext 308. For additional information visit [www.dupagecasa.org](http://www.dupagecasa.org) and click EVENTS. Thank you for your support of CASA's fight against child abuse.

### Third Annual CASA Cares 5K Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>

Ready to shed those winter blues? Kick off the spring season with CASA on April 27<sup>th</sup> at the 3rd Annual 5K Run/Walk at McCollum Park, Downers Grove.



Meet us there at 7:30 a.m., purchase your reflective CASA action bracelet and off we will go! The race begins at 8:00 a.m. sharp! While running the 3.1 mile course, you will be helping a child in need. April is Child Abuse Prevention month and you're making a difference! The first 300 participants will receive a CASA Cares running cap, along with a goody bag filled with surprises! To register on-line please visit [www.signmeupsports.com](http://www.signmeupsports.com).

We'll see you out there!

# Powerless Children Need Powerful Friends!

## OUR GRATITUDE TO ADVOCATES AND FRIENDS

Advocates assigned to new cases were: Paul Barrett, Kristin Dixon, Mike Hoffer, Carol Miecznikowski, Carol Papke, Katie Martin and Wendy McCaffrey.

Advocates whose cases have closed: Matt Breslin, Mike Hoffer, Patrick Goonan, Karen Helm, Jeri Lau, Dave Johnsen, and Pat Hooper.

Thank you all for all that you do!

## FINANCIAL NEWS

CASA gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the following organizations:

- Blowitz-Ridgeway Foundation - \$20,000
- Exchange Club of Naperville - \$20,000
- MedCore International, LLC - \$10,000
- Illinois Attorney General (VCVA) - \$4,000
- DuPage County Bar Foundation - \$3,000
- Rotary Club of West Chicago - \$1,000
- Naperville Evening Kiwanis - \$1,000
- Naperville Rotary Club - \$600
- Glen Ellyn Lions Club - \$500
- K & B Financial - \$500
- Kiwanis Club of Downers Grove - \$300
- Union Church of Hinsdale - \$285
- Glen Ellyn Woman's Club - \$150



## HELPING HANDS

The CASA staff has greatly appreciated the nimble fingers of the following volunteers, who have helped in the office during January, February and March:

- Nancy Battaglia
- Marianne Brouard
- Marj Cole
- Shevawn Everett
- Marion Harless
- Wendy McCaffrey
- Ramona Robert
- Eileen Petitto
- Ramona Robert
- Lois Seijo



# Happy Birthday!

- |                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| SallyAnn Bala        | Alice Barney   |
| Amy Boone            | Julia Bronge   |
| Paul Carmignani      | Jane Cox       |
| Kristin Dixon        | Judie Elenbaas |
| Maria English        | Kathy Gajewski |
| Cindy Giles          | Marion Harless |
| Emily Hinds          | Cathy Huffman  |
| Dave Johnson         | Katie Martin   |
| Mary McAuliffe       | Susan McKenna  |
| Holly Osterman       | Eileen Petitto |
| Connie Puchalski     | Julie Reich    |
| Sara Scharringhausen | Lois Seijo     |
| Lyn Shean            | Helen Spetly   |
| Linda Vazzetti       | Nancy Vlasak   |
| Cindy Walthour       |                |

## News You Can Use

### JUNE INFORMATION SESSIONS

If you know someone who would make a great advocate, please encourage him or her to attend one of the Information Sessions scheduled in June. One session will be held in the CASA office on Monday, June 23, from 10:00 to 11:00; a second session will be held on Thursday, June 26, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Wayne and Helen Fox Community Center, located at 306 Main Street in West Chicago.

During each session our Supervisors will offer an overview of what CASA is all about the important role played by our Advocates. Applications for our September Advocate Training Program will be available. For more information please contact Melissa Auer at 630-221-0889 ext. 306 or [melissa@dupagecasa.org](mailto:melissa@dupagecasa.org).

**Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I will learn.**  
~ Benjamin Franklin

### WELCOME NEW ADVOCATES

On April 11, 15 new volunteers will be sworn in as Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of DuPage County. Presiding Judge Stanley Austin will perform the ceremony at the CASA office located in the DuPage County Courthouse.

CASA is proud to welcome the following advocates from Wheaton: Susan Marelllo, Laura Weubbe, and Mary Pieters. The new advocates from Naperville are: Judy Curley, Judy Bieniek, and Erin Gilbert. In addition CASA welcomes Marilyn Davis and Dick Winchell of Aurora, Carol Asselmeier and Kris Leston of

Glen Ellyn, Michelle Barrett of Hinsdale, Pat M. Green of West Chicago, Kim Cobb of Roselle, Orysia Killion of Clarendon Hills, and Fran Wisniewski of Carol Stream.

### FALL ADVOCATE SERVICE TRAINING

Our next Advocate Training Program will begin in September. Classes will be held in Oak Brook on Monday and Thursday evenings for five weeks. Daytime availability and basic computer skills are required. There is a training fee of \$75.00, payable at the first class. While anyone interested in becoming an Advocate is encouraged to apply, we have a special need for male volunteers, volunteers of color and volunteers who are bi-lingual in Spanish. Applications are available on the CASA of DuPage website, at the June Information Sessions, or by contacting Melissa Auer at 630-221-0889 ext. 306 or [melissa@dupagecasa.org](mailto:melissa@dupagecasa.org). Applications must be received by August 1.



**The solution of adult problems tomorrow depends in large measure upon the way our children grow up today. There is no greater insight into the future than recognizing when we save our children, we save ourselves. ~ Margaret Mead**