

CASA for Kids



VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1

APRIL 2017

Trails West CASA

April 3 Benefit In-service with Landon Schaffert

Dates to Remember:

- *Board Meetings are held the second Monday of each Month at noon, CASA office*
- *Garage Sale and Food Sales during Rendezvous 2017*

Trails West CASA held its second annual Benefit In-service on April 3, 2017 at West Winds Country Club. Over 80 people supported this event which raised \$6,700 to assist CASA in providing services to abused and neglected children in the community. We would like to thank our volunteers, the community, as well as the many area businesses for attending the event.

The event started the morning of April 3 with many volun-

teers and Board Members assisting Elisa Banks in transforming the West Winds Country Club into "The Land of Oz". She creatively decorating the tables to reflect the entire story from a Kansas farm house to the Emerald City. Many thanks to Elisa for her hours of service to CASA.

The silent auction began at 7:00 pm complimented by hot hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. The many contributors to our auction made for a diverse

and exciting sale. At 8:00 pm Landon gave a rousing presentation about his journey to overcome his blindness in a sighted world. He entertained us with the many adventures and twists in his life. Thanks to all that attended.



Donors at the April 3 Benefit In service

Trails West CASA wants to thank the many community members who donated tickets and silent auction items to our benefit. Please support our sponsors noted below:

5 Star Custom Design
Absolute Attractions
Ace Hardware/Danson's Inc.
Adams Bank and Trust
Allen's Carpet/Furniture
Arby's
Banner Health
Bayside Golf Club
Big Mac Kiwanis Club
Bittersweet Bakery
Bomgaars
Buenz Gifts
Cutting Edge Salon
Diary Queen
Deb and Bill Boutwell
Duke's Auto Body
Edward Jones

Ellen Wright
Flowers by Mike
Friends of Goodall Library
Front Street
Gail Schreiter
Ginny Stienke
Gold Spur Restaurant
Haythorn Land and Cattle
Head 2 Toe
Holiday Inn Express (current)
Ice Born
Julie Huff and Kelly Haythorn
Jan's Restaurant
Johnson, Bergmeier, Wolf, Cipperley
La Patrona, Lampstand
LuRae Hagan
McQuillan and Wendell
Office Services
Ole's Big Game
Open Range
Petal Pushers
Petrified Wood Gallery

Pierce Law Office
Pinnacle Bank
Prairie Theatre
Rose Saddlery
Safeway
Schmidt Motors
Sapp Brothers
Sharon Ott family
Shopko
Teresa Swick
Thrivent Financial
Trails End Gifts
Walker Drug/USave
Wal Mart
Watering Hole
West Wind Golf club
Western Insurers
Western States Bank
Wiest Hardware
Winnifred Suhr
Windy Gap
Wolf Landscape Design

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Why I joined CASA by Volunteer, Vance Nelson

From my career work as a Curator (Supervisor) of State Historic Sites, located in Nebraska and North Dakota, it is not obvious that my Bachelor's Degree from the University of Nebraska is in Education. Even though I taught in classrooms for the first two years after graduation, I found that the career in historic sites work also offered opportunities to continue work as a "teacher," by planning interpretive programs, involving both children and adults.

After my retirement and move to Ogallala, I found that Sharon Ott's invitation to me to become a CASA Volunteer, was intriguing. I had read

about a case of abuse, not so much of children, but of adults, that had been written by a good friend of mine, Nellie Snyder Yost. This was her last book, and I was in her home watching her work on her typewriter to put the finishing touches on this book. She told me that she had written this book entitled: "Evil Obsession: The Annie Cook Story". It is about a local, North Platte-Hershey NE woman that was allowed to get away with all sorts of abuse, while respectable people look the other way.

Nellie told me that she felt "driven" to do this book, because she believed that somehow people needed to begin

to confront the monster of abuse, and put an end to the "cycle of abuse." So, when I saw the relationship to my long-standing career and interest in children's education and my interest in "Liberal Studies," through my University of Oklahoma Master's Degree program, and remembering the problems that my brother-in-law and sister-in-law had during their attempts to be Foster Parents, I thought that being a CASA Volunteer offered an opportunity to not "look the other way," but, instead try to get involved, and perhaps help "neglected and abused children" toward a better life.

Heather Gill presents "Circle of Security" to CASA Volunteers

Our January 10, 2017 Volunteer in-service was presented by Heather Gill, the area instructor for "Circle of Security". The interactive discussion centered on the exchange between a parent and their child.

The "Circle" is composed of two steps, exploring and returning for validation. The child will explore their world by mov-

ing away from the parent. This action can consist of watching their world, playing, or trying to walk. But the child will need to return for validation, so "asks" the parent for attention. Depending on the age of the child and the response of the adult, this "circle" is composed of a variety of responses from crying, cradling, tantrums or

smiles. Parents in the class are taught to understand this circle and accept the child's need to explore and return. The class is usually taught in a group so the parents can learn from one another. Upon completion of the eight week course, the parents can develop and maintain a support group. Please let your clients know about this class.

Leaghea Lynch presents "Wise Minds" program

On March 7, 2017, Leaghea Lynch of Sandhills Crisis Intervention Program, presented "Wise Minds" to the volunteers at Trails West CASA during our monthly in-service.

"Wise Minds" is the nationally recognized program to assist domestic abuse victims. Leaghea presents

the eight week program and its follow up to women who are court ordered to attend her class. Women also attend because counselors recommend the program.

The interactive question and answer time was very beneficial to our volunteers because they can now help support the program to

our clients in the HHS system.

If you would like further information about the "Wise Minds" program please call Leaghea at Sand Hills Crisis Intervention Program at 284-6055.

New CASA Volunteer, Gina Votapka

CASA is proud to announce that Gina Votapka was sworn in on March 7 as a new volunteer for CASA.

Gina a life-long Nebraskan, Gina and her husband Charlie have lived in Keith County for 27 years where they raised 3 children. Gina enjoys spending time with her children and vacation on their motorcycles. She is currently employed at Office Services as the Route Sales person.

When asked why she wanted to join

CASA, Gina stated, **"CASA met my personal goals to serve the abused and neglected children in our community. As a mother of three grown children, the CASA mission of a forever home for every child, aligns with my own values.**

Trails West CASA is glad to have Gina as a member of our team.



New Volunteer, Gina Votapka and her husband Charles at the April Benefit.

Trails West CASA is seeking Volunteers and Board Members

Volunteers and Board Members come from all walks of life and serve all four of our counties: Keith, Arthur, Perkins and Garden counties. CASA volunteers are Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children. Specially trained for this important community service, CASA Volunteers are appointed by our county judge to speak up for abused and neglected

children as appointed Officers of the court. Board members serve as oversight of our organization and provide fund raising assistance.

CASA is currently accepting applications from the community. Qualifications include an interest in helping the community, and the applicant must be 21 years of age and able to pass the background

investigation.



Volunteers attend the Benefit

New Board Member, Christel Armstrong

Christel Armstrong is our newest Board member and also is serving on the 'Sidekicks for Families League'. Christel and her husband Cameron have three children still living at home. She is a life-long western Nebraskan, growing up in Gehring.

Christel is employed by Wal-Mart and had the opportunity to open the Ogallala store. She

and her company agree that serving the community is an important part of this busy job.

Christel told us that she wants to help families in need and felt the Board was a great role for her. She said, "I want to be a part of giving back to the community where it could benefit the most. Also, I want to work in partnership with other organizations."

Please join us in welcoming Christel Armstrong to our Board of Directors.



Trails West CASA

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Cell: 970-712-4268 (Laurie Sinner)



A Powerful Voice in a
Child's Life

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ABOUT CASA AND OUR VOLUNTEERS:

The volunteers of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) are ordinary citizens who are committed to the concept that every child has the right to a safe and permanent home. The average volunteer provides 10-15 hours per month of service to children in our communities. The training of these volunteers includes 30 hours of nationally recognized orientation and annual training regarding the effect of parental substance abuse, domestic violence, guardianship, compassion fatigue, suicide prevention and other subjects. If you are interested in Volunteering, please contact Laurie Sinner at 308-284-9858.

Board Members: Sally Haythorn-Mayden, Christel Armstrong, Cheryl Beckius, Craig Draucker, Richard Johnson, Rory Roundtree, Rod Ruzanic, Julie Huff, Vivian Salazar, Pat Welsh, Josh Wendell and Mary Wilson

Board Member Corner

CASA's Board Members are ordinary citizens committed to helping abused children of Keith, Arthur, Perkins, and Garden Counties. This all volunteer Board comes from many walks of life, some re-

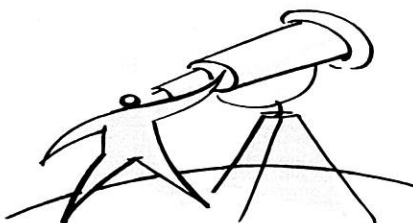
tired, others work full time in various industries or businesses. They provide administrative direction, fund raising and support to the child advocate volunteers.

The Board is responsible for fund raising as well as administrative functions. Planned future fund raisers include the Rendezvous Garage Sale in September.

The Board Members are: Sally Haythorn-Mayden (President), Christel Armstrong, Cheryl Beckius, Craig Draucker, Julie Huff, Richard Johnson, Rory Roundtree, Rod Ruzanic, Vivian

Salazar, Pat Welsh, Josh Wendell and Mary Wilson.

Board Meetings: The Board meets the second Monday of each month at noon in the CASA office at 307 West A. Street in Ogallala, NE. If you have any questions or are interested in serving as a Board Member please contact the office at 308-284-9858.



**Board member, attended the
CASA annual Benefit**

