
❖ CASA MATTERS ❖

CASA of the Tennessee Heartland, Inc.
Court Appointed Special Advocates for Abused and Neglected Children
Serving Anderson, Morgan, Roane, and Scott Counties

June 2007

THE SADDEST CHILD IN THE STATE

By Cindy Koehler

He was the saddest child in the state. She was the most determined person in the county.

When they came together good things happened.

Johnny was 7 years-old when he was placed in the Department of Children's Services custody. Johnny was alone, hungry, dirty and frightened when the social worker took him to his foster home.

Carrie was 47 when she was sworn-in as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA). Carrie was concerned about child abuse, committed to doing something about the abuse, and was awed by the responsibility she was assuming.

Carrie became Johnny's volunteer advocate.

Carrie met with Johnny - often. They talked. Carrie listened as Johnny spoke of his fears, dreams, and concerns. Sometimes, when Carrie talked Johnny listened.

Carrie spoke with Johnny's lawyer, teachers, counselors, foster parents, pediatrician, and, once, was even able to talk to Johnny's father who was residing 1,300 miles away.

Carrie met with police officers. She studied court, medical and social service documents. Carrie learned about Johnny and his life. She shared this information with the juvenile court judge, and she made recommendations to the court relating to Johnny's placement and educational and social needs. She argued for Johnny to receive services and pushed for timely court hearings and reviews.

Carrie remained a constant for Johnny as he negotiated his way through the dynamic and turbulent foster care system.

Three years after they met, Carrie sat in court as Johnny became a permanent member of a new family.

Carrie's eyes watered as she saw a beaming Johnny elbow his older brother. She felt her heart lurch when she saw Johnny's new parents wrap their arms about the child that she and they cared so much about. But Carrie cried when Johnny came to her and said, "I am the happiest boy in the state."

CASA of the Tennessee Heartland and the abused and neglected children of our community need concerned, committed individuals to become Court Appointed Special Advocates. No special background is required to volunteer, but occasional daytime availability for court appearances is needed. Volunteers must be at least 21 years of age and pass a police background screen. Call (865) 425-0888 or your local CASA office for additional information.

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Our goal is to have thirty new volunteers this year. Please help us find one today.

CASA of the Tennessee Heartland Calendar of Events

January 26, 2008 - Penguin Plunge
 February 23, 2008 - Barbeque and Bluegrass Bash
 March 15, 2008 - Leprechaun Run
 May 3, 2008—Drawing for Take A Chance for CASA's Kids
 (Chances will go on sale January 3rd, 2008)

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Christy Harness Celebrates Six Years with CASA

For Scott County native Christy Harness, love and support for and from her family, friends, and community makes her job with CASA of the Tennessee Heartland purposeful. "Hearing about child abuse cases is hard. It is rewarding knowing that CASA volunteers give these children hope and provide them with someone loyal to their best interests. When things work out for a child, I know I am where I am meant to be."

There is no typical day in CASA's Scott County office and Christy is a master of flexibility. As County Coordinator, she supervises Samantha Sharpe, an Americorps VISTA volunteer. Samantha, also a Scott county native, serves CASA fulltime recruiting and retaining volunteers, researching funding sources and in public relations. Christy also supports and supervises the volunteer advocates, all of whom currently have children assigned to them. She and Samantha preside over the local steering committee that is actively involved in fundraising and publicity for CASA. Christy is directly involved with the court and the agencies that must respond to child abuse and neglect cases.

Christy Harness has life goals just like anyone else with a demanding job. "I can see myself retired someday, but never can I see myself not involved with CASA! I expect to be a CASA volunteer eventually. CASA serves a purpose and I am proud to be a part of it." March 2007 marked Christy's sixth anniversary as a County Coordinator with CASA of the Tennessee Heartland.

From the desk of our Board President:

"The world needs dreamers and the world needs doers. But above all, the world needs dreamers who do." —Sarah Ban Breathnach

Thank you to all the incredible CASA volunteers who are both dreamers and doers. With our wonderful and committed volunteers and staff, CASA is united with one purpose, the best interests of the children who need us.

Michele Brandenburg

We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of those who have made a gift to the agency during the period 5/1/06 until 5/31/07. In addition to those mentioned below, we thank all our supporters through our various special events, the Combined Federal Campaign, United Way designations, and other activities. We apologize in advance if anyone is inadvertently left off our annual donors list.

Individuals

CASA's Caring Circle (\$1,000 and up)

Michele Brandenburg
Anonymous (2)
Bromma Pemberton
W.H. Swain
George & Janette Taylor

Patron (\$500-\$999)

Mark Wayne & Jimmie Sue
Strange
Stuart and Jill Chasan
Karen Crutchfield
Joseph & Thelma McGrory
In Honor of Cyndy Bailes
Linda Osborne, DVM

Sponsor (\$250-\$499)

Marsha Swain
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Tom Hill & Joan O'Steen
Anonymous
Larry Jones
Elaine Mueller
Wm. Paul & Iva Phillips
Murray Rosenthal
Brian Weber
Jerry Voiles
Howard & Nancy Baker
Patricia Dail
Spencer & Leesa Ellis
Frank Robinson

Advocate (\$100-\$249)

Lou Arnold
Jorulf Brynestad
Bob & Jinny Dunlap
Peter & Mary Emanuel
Jerried Jeffers
Peggy & Mike Mahoney
Steven & Tausha Price
Karleen Richter
R.H. Ritchie
Irene Robbins
Leslie Shotts
Christy Harness
Martha Yoakum
Russ Morel
Ricky Keeton
Kay Brookshire
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Jean Cole
Gary Cooper
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David Flitcroft
Horace Friedman
Loretta Friend
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Laura Hartman
Clark Huffman
Dennis & Patsy Jeffers
Elizabeth Jernigan
Quentin & Lynda King
Carolyn Krause
John Kubarewicz
Joe La Grone
Ronald Lands
Nancy Lesesne
Clarence & Martha Lowe
Joan Marshall
Harold & Martha McCurdy
John McKittrick
Margaret Nestor & Charlie Crume
Lucy & Don Nickel
Alice Noggle
Jessemae Noritake
Victor & Dianne Pare
Randall Pearson
Hella Peterson
Dorothy & Tom Phillips
Anne Phillips
Joycelyn Pope
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Pam Queener
Terry & Mary Ann Roark
Bob & Carol Smallridge
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Tom & Joan Vicary
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Vicky White
Jeanie & Bill Wilcox
Karen Wilkins-Butz
Dorothy Wilkinson
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Dr. Neil & Karen Aldredge
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Brenda Sexton
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John Witherspoon
Dolores Boody
Doug & Charley Cofer
Bonnie Griffin
Melvin L. Halbert
Dorothy Keller
Don & Jil Smith
Eleanor Helton
Rose Holz
Nick Manis
Richard Raridon
Bonnie Bullock

Marilyn DeVors
Peggy Tague
Marty V. Rom

In Memoriam

Larry Dickens
Kay Brookshire & Tom Beehan
Eddie Chirip
Carole Jakes
Emory Valley Center
Virgil Lawson
Walt Bower
Choo Choo Pack
Mark & Gena Evans
Elwana Justice
Clayton & Pat Lawson
On-Line Computing
Steven & Tausha Price
Charles & Jeanie Sherrod
Richard Handler
Walter & Lois Zobel

Civic Clubs & Organizations

Anderson County Toy Run
Kiwanis Club of Oak Ridge
Jefferson Middle School
Scott County Fun Run

Scott County Safety School
East TN Chapter of the Society of Fire
Prevention Engineers
Upper Cumberland Intervention Program

Churches

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
First United Methodist Church—Oak Ridge
Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church
First Presbyterian Church
Grace Covenant Church
First United Methodist Church—Oneida
First Baptist Church—Oak Ridge
Norris Religious Fellowship
West Knoxville Friends Meeting
Trinity United Methodist Men
Trinity United Methodist Church
Petros United Methodist Church

Businesses, Corporations, Foundations, & Others

United Way of Anderson County
Roane County United Way
Ronald McDonald House Charities
Variety Club International of

East Tennessee
National CASA Association—Expansion
Grant
Anderson County Government
Lucille S. Thompson Family Foundation
ORNL Federal Credit Union
Operation Pocket Change
TN Commission on Children & Youth
Dept. of Finance & Administration—
VOCA
TN Bar Foundation
TN CASA Association—grant
Wal-Mart Oak Ridge
Citizens First Bank—Wartburg
Reed Advertising
Ares Real Estate, LLC

Media Supporters

The Oak Ridger
Anderson County Visions Magazine
Oak Ridge Observer
The Courier News
Independent Herald
Scott County News
Morgan County News
Roane County News
WVLT-FM
BBT Communications

Food for Thought:

I am constantly amazed at and ever thankful for the number of people and organizations who are willing to support the special work that our agency does, while I am also ever mindful of how many potential supporters there are as well. There are so many different pieces to the puzzle that must be in place in order to help a child, and over my almost fifteen years here we have helped several thousand children to live more healthy and happy lives.

We continue to strive to increase the financial support for the agency so that we can help more children. We will continue to do this until we can say we are able to provide an advocate for every child who needs one.

Over the next few months we will be stressing a number of initiatives. Our next "Take a Chance for CASA's Kids" raffle will be in the first months of 2008, and we are looking for sponsors now who can help us grow the available prizes and our ability to market the event.

We will be fully developing our new "Caring Circle: Providing a Future for CASA's Kids" donor recognition program to encourage donations of \$1,000 or more over a year.

We have also just significantly enhanced our ability to receive funds. It is now possible to donate directly at www.casatnh.org and to also print out the form for recurring donations through automatic withdrawals or automatic credit card charging. We also now accept VISA, Mastercard, American Express, and Discover Card.

We hope that many people will consider starting to pledge a certain amount once or twice a month using the automatic features we now have. If every person reading this newsletter would donate \$10 a month to help a child, it would make a huge difference in what we could accomplish. Even though our donors at the Caring Circle level are critically important to us, I cannot stress enough how important even the smallest amount is as well. I once heard a fundraiser say, "There is no gift too large nor too small for our accounting system."

Please take a minute now to make a pledge or a gift to support an abused child. For only \$1.64 a day you can make a huge difference to an abused child. Thank you for your support!

Cyndy Bailes, Executive Director

We are a member of the National CASA Association and the Tennessee CASA Association.

News from Heartland Counties

ROANE COUNTY

We have all collectively caught our breath since our successful Leprechaun Run in March. Our presence in the community has grown by leaps and bounds because of this event. First, we received excellent press coverage of the event bringing awareness to many people who were not aware of our program. Secondly, we had a significant response from businesses, community leaders and other agencies that sponsored our run. Thirdly, we raised funds for the CASA program. We expect CASA's Leprechaun

Run to grow and become an anticipated annual event. Thanks to all the volunteers and staff that made this event a success.

Since the last newsletter we have helped many children in finding safe, permanent homes in which they can thrive. In one case, one of these children was adopted. We have sworn in two new CASA volunteers so far this year and are actively seeking several more.

SCOTT COUNTY

The penguins have come and gone from Scott County once again!! But oh yes, they will return next January 26th. CASA's 2nd Annual Penguin Plunge was held on January 27th and was a huge success. We had 28 Penguins, from age 6 to "over 50," brave the chilly waters of Oneida City Park in order to raise money for the local program. The Steering Committee, staff and volunteers look forward to the continued growth of this event. We hope you will all mark your calendar and help support our unique event that supports our work with CASA's kids.

A little over six and half years ago CASA of the Tennessee Heartland came to Scott County and began providing advocacy for the abused and neglected children of the community. Our office consisted of a space in the local courthouse that measured about a 12x12 and man were we happy! However, over the

years we began to grow and we started to accumulate things. Even though we are "close knit," things became too snug. This past April (2007) we were fortunate enough to relocate to another space; CASA found a new home!!!!!!! The Scott County office is now located at 308 Court Street in Huntsville which is to the east side of the courthouse. We now have, at least, 4 times the space and are ready for another growth spurt! We are actively recruiting new volunteers and ready to spread our wings and take flight. In a small sense, we understand what it is like to get a new home and feel all warm inside!!

Finally, we thank the Morgan-Scott Project for turning their thrift shop over to us for the next few months. We appreciate them providing us with a new way to raise funds.

ANDERSON COUNTY

Four new CASA volunteers were sworn-in by The Honorable April Meldrum in March. Kate Allen, Nancy Chrisman, Gene Hubbard, and Jennifer Parton immediately assumed volunteer responsibilities and are actively "speaking up" for local abused and neglected children. "*Thank you!*" to these and all of our wonderful CASAs.

Abused children in Anderson County continue to be in desperate need of volunteer advocates. From January 1 through May 17, 2007, the CASA of the

Tennessee Heartland Clinton office received 71 new referrals from Juvenile Court. Because of a shortage of volunteers and the large number of children requiring advocates, only a fraction of the children who require the services of CASA are able to be served.

In April, the in-service training, **Youth Suicide Prevention and Intervention**, was hosted by Anderson County CASA staff. A trainer from the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network presented. In addition to our agency attending, staff from other community agencies also came.

MORGAN COUNTY

We are pleased to announce that John Norris is the new County Coordinator for CASA of the Tennessee Heartland in Morgan County. We are also pleased to announce that Morgan County has a new office located at 110 Maiden Street in the Federal Building (Wartburg Post Office) room 111. We are excited about moving in, making CASA part of the

community, and most of all being advocates for the children who need CASA. We need volunteers in Morgan County. We continually accept new applicants and are planning a training class this summer. Any one interested in becoming a CASA volunteer can contact the Morgan County office at 423-539-5959.

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Heartland

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Where Are We?

Anderson County CASA Program
Anderson County Courthouse,
Room 115 (865) 463-6850
Morgan County CASA Program
110 Maiden Street, Wartburg
(423) 539-5959

Roane County CASA Program
Farnham Building, Harriman
(865) 882-6111

Scott County CASA Program
308 Court Street, Huntsville
(423) 663-8943

Administrative Office
POB 4426, 161-D Robertsville Road
Oak Ridge, TN 37831
(865) 425-0888
director@casatnh.org
www.casatnh.org

AGENCY WISH LIST

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For more information about the
CASA program call:
865-425-0888
director@casatnh.org
Cyndy Bailes,
Executive Director

**Training Classes
will be starting
soon. Call your
local office for an
application
package.**

CASA of the Tennessee Heartland
P.O. Box 4426
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

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