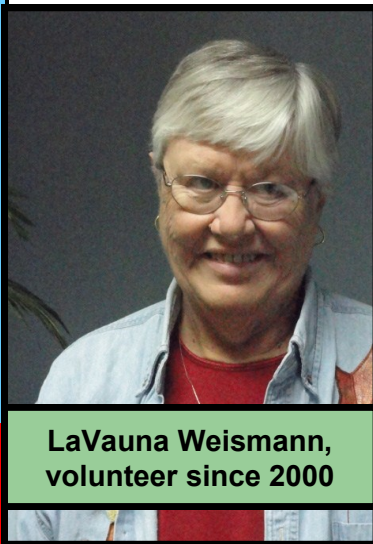




**MARCH  
2013**

***“CASA for York County supports and provides volunteer advocacy for abused and neglected children, enabling them to thrive in a safe, permanent home.”***

## **We HONOR our long-time Volunteers**



**LaVauna Weismann,  
volunteer since 2000**

LeVauna Weismann's dedication to the CASA program became evident in this interview! She first volunteered to help raise money for the Omaha CASA program as a student at Metro College. At the time she said, "If I ever live where there is a CASA group, I will be the first to volunteer." Luckily for this program, that is exactly what happened.

LeVauna responded to an ad in the *York News Times* asking for CASA volunteers and she ended up being the first sworn in for the existing York/Seward CASA program. LeVauna has been a tireless volunteer for the York CASA program for the last thirteen years.

LeVauna is a life-long Nebraska resident and has lived in York for the past 46 years. She and her husband Jerome have been married for 58 years. They have one daughter, three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren who give her much joy. LeVauna spent her life dedicated to a law enforcement career including the final 20 years at the Nebraska Center for Women here in York. Jerome is retired from NPPD.

LeVauna is passionate about her volunteer work with the York CASA program and says, "The most important service we as CASA volunteers provide is an extra set of eyes for the court." Other professionals involved with a family have many other cases/families to follow. The CASA volunteer usually just has one or two children/families at a time and can dedicate themselves to being a voice for those particular children. LeVauna wanted us to know why she volunteers with the CASA program. She says, "I want to help children who have no voice, I get great job satisfaction, and the CASA program is a worthwhile organization."

### **Did you know that ...**

*...in 2012 in Nebraska 1326 children had a CASA volunteer?*

*....in 2012 in Nebraska 634 CASA volunteers advocated for abused and neglected children?*

*....at the end of December 2012 there were 1665 waiting for CASA services?*

*.....children with a CASA volunteer spend an average of 4 months less in out of home care than children without a CASA volunteer?*

*....if the average length of stay in care were shortened by just one month for each of Nebraska's foster children, the annual savings realized by Nebraska taxpayers would be \$10.6 million?*

*"To give a child a CASA volunteer is to give them a voice,*

*To give them a voice is to give them hope, and to give them hope is to give them the world. "*

*...Pamela Butler, former CASA child*

Candy Otte, owner and partner of Kopsa Otte & Associates, a CPA firm in York, has been a valuable board member for the CASA program since 2003. She is married to Troy Otte who farms in the Grafton area. They have been married for 22 years and have two children ages 16 and 13. The Otte's have been members of the York community since 1991.

Candy was encouraged to become involved in the CASA program while participating in Leadership York in 2002. Candy says, "I knew I wanted to become involved when I learned that a CASA volunteer is a voice for a child when there may not be anyone else to represent their wishes." Candy encourages other members of the York community to get involved and become a CASA advocate. Candy explained further saying, "Due to the large number of abused and neglected children in the York County court system there is a large need for more CASA program volunteers." She reports that the York County CASA program is only serving about half the children in the system because there are not enough volunteers.



**Candy Otte, board member since 2003**

Candy realizes that every child needs a voice when it comes to navigating the complications and issues surrounding abuse

She hopes that some-  
program will be able  
child in need of a

and neglect cases.  
day our local CASA  
to serve every  
CASA volunteer.

**I am for the child™**



**Sue Cordes,  
10 yr. volunteer**

Grand Island native Sue Cordes came to York to pursue a career in teaching and ended up raising her family here. Sue has enjoyed a variety of careers since 1960 including teaching, real estate, and human resources management, but her interest in the issues of children is what attracted her to volunteer with the York CASA program. Sue and her husband Bob have been married for 52 years and raised four children in York, one of whom passed away at the age of 22. Sue and Bob enjoy following the adventures of their 13 grandchildren.

Sue has been volunteering for the York CASA program for 12 years. She says, "After retiring, I was looking for a quality volunteer opportunity and after reading about the CASA volunteer advocates in a news article I realized there was a great need for volunteers, so I volunteered." Sue says making sure that the families are getting the services they need to resolve the issues which resulted in the removal of a child from the home is very important. She added, "The most important job of a CASA volunteer is to try and make sure that each child or sibling group gets the permanent, safe and loving home they deserve."

When asked what Sue would say to prospective volunteers for the CASA program she added this, "Only about half of the cases in York County Court have a CASA volunteer assigned because there are not enough CASA volunteers. The professionals involved in these cases are very busy with many, many cases. The CASA volunteer could be the only constant in that child's life when everything they know and are familiar with changes in an instant. The CASA advocate is the one thing that stays the same for them throughout the entire process. My wish is that every child have a CASA advocate! And we need you." Well said Sue!

## Special Thanks to all our Donors from May 2012 through February 2013

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Judge Evans presides over the adoption of Jessica\* who was placed in foster care after suffering neglect/emotional abuse and her parents failure to provide a safe home for her.  
 \*name changed

Your donation to CASA for York County is used to recruit, train and support our dedicated CASA volunteer advocates.  
 To make a donation, send a check to CASA for York County, 510 Lincoln Ave., York, NE 68467, or contact Carol Knieriem at (402) 362-5454 or [carol@casaforyork.org](mailto:carol@casaforyork.org).



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*"...CASA volunteers transform children's lives.... save abused children from lingering in foster care."*

Judge Glenda Hatchett,  
National CASA Spokesperson



**Lift up**  
her voice.



**Our Office Assistant,  
Evelyn Batson**



### CASA NEEDS:

- ♦ gift certificates for meals during volunteer training classes, or office supplies
- ♦ postage stamps (Forever and/or 20 cent)
- ♦ YOU to volunteer!

***Volunteers are needed. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the CASA office at #362-5454***