



**Summer
2013**

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

CASA Volunteers Continue to Learn

As a member program of the National CASA Association, one of the requirements is that volunteers must complete 12 hours of continuing education each year. There are many ways this can be accomplished such as reading books, attending trainings, seminars, or attending the National CASA Convention. Attending a recent training session in Seward, volunteers pictured to the right acquired some of their training hours for 2013. The group below was able to acquire all of their annual hours by attending the National CASA Convention in Anaheim, California.



Pictured (from left front): LeVauna Weismann, Sue Cordes, Carol Knieriem, Chris Tonniges, Pat Huffman, Kathy Quick, Della & Michael Crutcher

Pictured (from left to right): Barb Buller, Amy Hoffman, Carol Knieriem, Michael Piraino (CEO of National CASA), Cathy Wismer, Della & Michael Crutcher



National CASA Mission

The National CASA Association, together with its state and local members, supports and promotes court-appointed volunteer advocacy for abused and neglected children so that they can thrive in safe, permanent homes.

**What permanency looks like:
From the eyes of
a volunteer**

I was so happy to hear that Eric's* court hearing went well and he is able to stay with Allen*, his stepdad. I was sitting in the parking lot waiting for my other CASA girl to finish her counseling session. I didn't notice a car pull up across the street until 3 boys came tumbling out calling "CASA Sam!" It was Eric and his brothers. He was running and jumped over a bush. I'd never seen him so happy and animated. This was right after the court hearing that gave Allen guardianship. Eric acted like a huge load had been lifted off his shoulders. As the boys ran around the lawn, he came back and gave Allen a big hug. I was so happy to know he now has a permanent home. I am happy to continue as his Courtesy CASA. *names have been changed



New volunteers were sworn in by Judge Evans in April, 2013. Pictured (from left to right): Lorraine Grenfell, Dale Kahla, Gayle Coffin, Kathy Moore, Jane Jensen and Tom Schmid

**A View from
the Outside**

My name is Mary Novak. I am attending Walden University online to obtain my Masters of Science in Leadership, with a specialization in Leader Development. As part of a recent Global Leadership course I needed to partner with a local organization to complete a volunteer activity. I contacted Carol Knieriem at CASA for York and was able to shadow her for a day. I learned so much in that time. I am still amazed at all of the pieces that come together to make CASA for York such an awesome organization.

In my visit I learned how a CASA volunteer's primary duty is to objectively evaluate information surrounding the child involved in the court case and make suggestions to the court that are in the best interest of the child. I was surprised at the extensive background review that must be completed prior to completing the 30 hours of training to be sworn in as an official CASA volunteer. I also did not realize that the CASA advocate is an actual extension of the juvenile court system and will meet regularly with teachers, daycare providers, case workers, attorneys, parents and others that may be critical to gathering facts surrounding the impacted child.

I was fortunate to be able to attend a board meeting, observe a court hearing and observe the CASA volunteer in action. I also reviewed some of the training material, blank court document templates, news letters and a handbook provided to volunteers. I must say that I had no concept of all the pieces involved in this process. This was incredibly eye opening for me in so many ways, and I learned so many things. I understand now that CASA for York is an organization about children and about having respect for all people. This is an important fact for me.

Since my visit I am excited to say that I have submitted my application to become a CASA volunteer. This experience also helped me realize how I may have shut out volunteer opportunities in the past based upon what I thought an organization did or needed. My time with Carol showed me that there are many working parts of the CASA for York program; and I realized that I may have many skill sets that could be helpful in ways I would never have known. I think that at times we sell ourselves short thinking that we don't have the capacity to help without really knowing what kind of help an organization needs. I hope that my experience leads others to ask questions and learn how activities they already enjoy can benefit wonderful organizations such as CASA for York County. Thank you Carol for taking the time to change my perspective!

"If we are to reach real peace in the world, we shall have to begin with children." —

Mohandas Gandhi

Why am I a CASA Volunteer?

Knowing or thinking that I
have made a positive differ-
ence in the life of a child.

Sue Cordes

It gives me a chance to
give back to the community.

LeVauna Weismann

I feel like I am mak-
ing a difference and giving
a child the best chance.

Jane Hoffschneider

It makes me feel good to
help; to be the voice of a
child is wonderful.

Chris Tonniges

What if this was my kid?
How would I want them to
be treated? I get to make a
difference.

Jack Garner

Special thanks to all Donors March 2013 through June 2013

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***Interested in volunteering?
Contact the CASA office at 362-5454 and learn
more about how you can help!***

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★ **"To the world you** ★
★ **may be one person.** ★
★ **but to one person you** ★
★ **may be the world."** ★
★ **Dr. Seuss** ★
★
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CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN



Director, Carol Knieriem, stands by display board at Gresham Health Fair.

Carol provides presentations to community groups. If your group would like to hear about the important work of CASA please contact Carol @ #362-5454

From the Child Advocacy Center in Lincoln

Total children seen in 2012 — **983**

Of those children:

74% were under the age of 12

79% were alleging sexual abuse

99% knew their alleged abuser

66% of the time, it was a family member

The sad fact is that for every one child we see at the Child Advocacy Center, there are ten more who suffer in silence...too afraid to tell.

CASA for York County STATS:

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Jan-June 2013</u>
#abused/neglected children	58	68	56
#active advocates	18	19	18
#children w/advocates	24	29	21
#children w/out advocates	34	39	35
#new advocates trained	6	7	6 (+5 in training)

Monetary donations to CASA for York County are used to recruit, train and support our dedicated CASA volunteer advocates. CASA for York County can also use:

- ◆ **gift certificates** for meals/snacks to be used during 3 hour volunteer training classes,
- ◆ **office supplies** and **postage stamps** (Forever or 20cent stamps)

To make a donation, send check to CASA for York County, 510 N Lincoln Ave., York, NE or contact Carol Knieriem at (402) 362-5454 or carol@casaforyork.org.