



**Volume No. 1
CASA for York County
Spring 2022**

What, spring already? Yep, it's already time for our bi-annual newsletter; time for an update on what has been happening here at CASA for York County, Nebraska. It's been a busy year, with three new CASA advocates successfully completing training and being sworn in, another training in progress and the joy of an adoption! Since our last communication, the number of children referred for our services has continued to grow. That's why these trainings are so important as our aim is for all children to have a CASA representing their best interests in the court. With a CASA communication and the chances of a positive outcome for these children improves greatly. Assisting in finding placements for abused and neglected children in a safe and permanent home is the objective of our program. We invite you to join us as we work toward these goals.



Pictured left to right: CASA Terrill Johns, Remedy, Jackie, Roman, Slate (down front) and Brian Wolfe, along with the Hon. Judge Lynelle Homolka

 **A Special Day!**

The day had arrived. A long-awaited day. A once-in-a-lifetime kind of day filled with joy, promise, cake, cookies and loved ones. It was Adoption Day for siblings Slate and Remedy.

Reflecting back on "the day," Jackie Wolfe, mother of three, speaks to the path she and husband Brian traveled to arrive at such a happy destination. A journey which began with foster parenting classes, the adoption of their now 11 year-old son Roman, and then fostering to adopt brother and sister, Slate and Remedy.

Slate and Remedy came to live with the Wolfe family, Jackie, Brian and Roman, at the ages of 2 years and 4 months respectively. Now a grown up 5 and 3 year-old, the love they found was about to become permanent.

It's funny, "Slate would say our last name before (the adoption), but Remedy would just say, 'my name Remedy Jane.' Now she says, 'my name is Remedy Jane Bridgett Wolfe,'" and Jackie says ... that means a lot.

And so three very proud kids, Remedy Jane Bridgett, Slate Ryan and Roman Michael, along with their parents were about to celebrate an adoption two-and-a-half years in the making.

Jackie says prior to choosing to foster/adopt, the couple had struggled to have a child of their own. During that time, Jackie came to understand, "It's a gift to bring other children into your heart as your own. I fell in love with Slate and Remedy (as she had Roman), as a mom you just know." (Continued on page 4)

Coffee with Elizabeth

There's never a dull moment here at the CASA office. One of my favorite aspects of my role as Director is how each day presents me with new challenges, and no two days are exactly the same. At any moment, we could get documentation on a new case, have a volunteer stop in for some guidance, or get a call from a legal party who wants to chat. The spontaneity keeps me on my toes. On the days where I am being pulled in every direction, and never able to anticipate what's coming next, I am reminded of the circumstances that our CASA children face. They too wake up each day not knowing what to expect. When you're a foster child, anything is a possibility; you could have a change of placement, have a highly anticipated visit be cancelled, or be pulled out of school for court or an appointment. Consistency becomes a foreign concept for them. While it is comforting to see most of these kids take things in stride and are incredibly resilient, any person who works in the child-welfare arena will tell you that resilient is just code for "good at burying their emotions." This is yet another facet where CASA can make a huge difference. For this reason, I am grateful for my unpredictable work life, because in doing so I know together we are reducing unpredictability in the lives of these children. That's why our volunteers advocate for case plans which prioritize wellbeing and comfort so these kids are able have moments filled with play and wonder.



Three new CASA advocates were sworn in by the Hon. Judge Lynelle Homolka in York County Court on December 23, 2021. Pictured left to right are the Hon. Lynelle Homolka, Hali Giesbrecht, Kay Magner, Brent Magner and Jake Owens. We are grateful they have chosen to serve as advocates. Another training is currently underway with two area residents taking part. **For information on becoming a CASA contact our office at: (402) 362-5454**
Or check out our website at: www.casaforyork.org

Children who have a CASA volunteer average eight fewer months in foster care than children without one.

LET US
PUT OUR MINDS
TOGETHER
AND SEE WHAT LIFE
WE CAN MAKE FOR
OUR CHILDREN.
-SITTING BULL

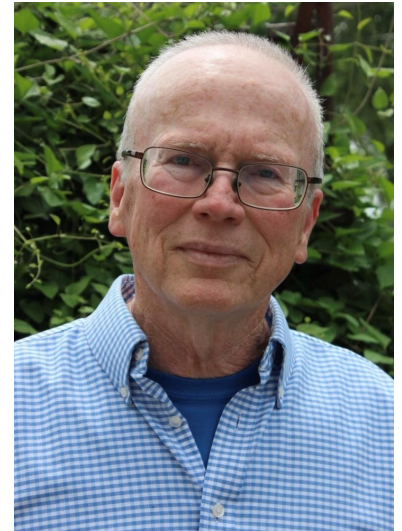
"Nothing you do for children is ever wasted."

- Garrison Keillor



From the desk of Dan

Since our last newsletter, four new volunteers finished their initial CASA training and were certified by the York County Court. Three of those volunteers have already been assigned to a child and, as newly appointed special advocates, are actively getting involved with their first assignment. I am excited for them as they begin their journey, and equally excited for them as they begin to experience the benefits of devoting time, energy, experience and love to advocate for children in need. To add to my excitement, I am currently halfway through another training session with two more new volunteers. These two bring great potential with them and I am not so sure if I am learning more from them, rather than them from me as their instructor. Regardless, I intend to have them prepared for certification and to be assigned other children in need of an advocate. I am also hoping to offer another class this spring for more new recruits and I remain optimistic. To steal part of a quote from a 100 year old friend of mine: “We are cooking with gas” here at CASA of York!

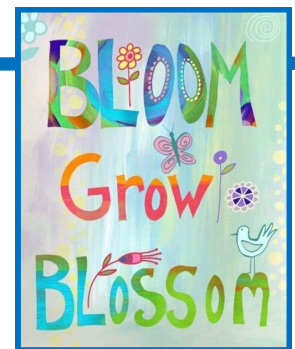


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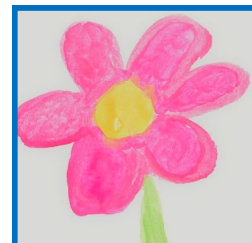


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NEBRASKA

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(Continued from Page 1) Throughout the court and adoption process for Slate and Remedy, the children had a CASA advocate. At first Jackie wondered why they needed one. She admits to being a little nervous. She hadn't had a CASA when Roman was adopted; this was new to her.

"But having a CASA was great," Jackie exclaims, "a CASA wants what's in the best interest of the children. Our CASA, Terrill Johns, and Elizabeth (the director of CASA for York County) did an amazing job being there for the kids and the families involved. Terrill went above and beyond for the kids. I can't emphasize enough how CASA is there for the best interest of the kids."

Jackie has advice for others who might be interested in fostering and adoption ... "Be patient with the system and the parents, and find the right agency to help you (through the process)."

On February 7, 2022 Jackie and Brian told the kids they were going to the courthouse to have a "Special Day." At 1:15 p.m. the family of five gathered, surrounded by the love of family and some amazing friends for Slate and Remedy's Adoption Day! A celebration was in order; cake and cookies were served up along with wishes for a bright future for an extraordinary family.



Join us for our Color Run/Walk as we Run Child Abuse Out of Town!

When: Sunday, April 24, 2022

Where: Mincks Park, York, Nebraska

Registration: 1:30 p.m.; Walk Start: 2 p.m.; 5K Run Start: 2:30 p.m.

Must be registered by April 10, 2022 to guarantee a T-shirt.

Sign up at: www.casaforyork.org
Or by calling: (402) 362-5454



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