
THE CASAGRAM

Yamhill County Court Appointed Special Advocate Program Newsletter

Spring 2010

Yamhill County CASA Program

117 NE 5th St., Suite I

McMinnville, OR 97128

Phone

Fax

503-434-6668

503-435-2398

Email

office@yccasa.org

http://www.yccasa.org

Amy Bissonnette

Program Director

Karen Willard

Coordinator of Volunteers

CASA is a United Way Member Agency and is supported by Yamhill County Commission on Children and Families.

2009 -2010 Board of Directors

Catherine Wright, Chair
Dr. Robert Moore , Vice-Chair
Carole Whitehead, Secretary
Bernie McGinnis, Treasurer
Yazmin Funes
Dorene Gleason
Carole Hansen
Patriciafaye Marshall
Dr. Phyllis Martin

Ways YOU can Contribute to CASA

Volunteer as a CASA



Join the Board of Directors



Make a Donation to CASA



Vote for CASA on

First Federal's Customer Ballot



Participate in our Fundraisers



Remember CASA in your Estate Planning



Purchase CASA Jewelry

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and CASAs play a vital role in state efforts to detect, prevent and heal children who are at risk for child abuse or who are recovering from instances of abuse.

Like other members of the court, teachers and DHS workers, CASAs are mandatory reporters trained to watch for child abuse and required to report any instances.

In addition to the 30 hours of training required before becoming a CASA, sworn in before the court, CASAs are required to attend 12 hours of training per year. In February, Debra Bridges with Yamhill County Victim Services presented local CASAs with some facts on one form of abuse—Child Molesters. One of the most alarming parts of the presentation to this writer was her blunt statement that, "Each of you know someone who has molested a child." Here are a few additional statistics pulled from Debra's presentation and additional sources.

On child molestation:

- ◆ 1 out of 4 girls will be molested
- ◆ 1 out of 9 boys will be molested
- ◆ Children ages 7—9 are the most commonly reported
- ◆ Fewer than 5% of child victims of molestation tell anyone
- ◆ Children are resilient; with caring adults who believe and support them, most overcome the abuse

On abuse:

- ◆ Firstborn children are most vulnerable to abuse
- ◆ Three years old—50 % of abused children are younger than 3 years old
- ◆ One year—90% of children who die from abuse are younger than 1 year old
- ◆ The cause may be something as simple as a mismatch in temperament between the child's temperament or behavior and the parent's temperament or expectations

A CASA will generally become involved after an abuse allegation has been determined "founded" by DHS and DHS intervenes with the court to protect the child and assist the family. While the DHS caseworker must manage several cases and provides services to the entire family, the CASA is a volunteer whose only responsibility is to see that the child's voice is heard.

"To give a child a CASA 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 Foster Child

CASA Profile: Karen Manfrin



Because of the training involved, CASAs are requested to make a 2 year commitment. Followers of the CASAGRAM will have noticed that most issues introduce a new training class with short profiles of the new volunteers. Of the 37 active CASAs, 11 have served more than 5 years, and only 1 has served more than 9 years — Karen Manfrin.

On March 14, 2010, Karen will have served as a CASA for 15 years. A native of the Bay Area, Karen and husband, Casey Manfrin, moved to McMinnville in 1982. Both of their children were born in McMinnville. Conor still lives in McMinnville and he and his wife, Lindsey, recently made Karen a doting grandmother. Younger son, Ryan, still uses McMinnville as his home base.

In 1995, Karen became a CASA because she “felt so lucky with a good family and healthy kids” that she wanted to give back. She remembers that part of the first training covered child sex abuse. Karen came home from the training session to find Casey and the kids fixing dinner and she burst into tears when she saw them. She

explained that it was just so difficult to think about what those kids had to deal with; she gets to leave, but they don't. So many of these kids miss out on the simple things that can bring so much comfort, like having their mom read *Goodnight Moon* to them.

Karen is a teaching assistant for special education in K-5 at Memorial Elementary and she loves her job. She's also a yoga instructor as well as a CASA volunteer, wife, mother and enthusiastic grandmother.

One of Karen's CASA cases was almost as enduring as she is; it lasted 10 years. At times it seemed there would be no happy outcome for this child moving from foster home to foster home. Karen felt part of her role was to be this child's memory when the child was too young to collect independent memories. But, there was an extraordinary foster parent who did finally provide the happy ending we all hope to see as a case outcome.

We're all lucky to have Karen in our corner.



CASAs are ordinary citizens with extraordinary commitment

Thank you to Our Donors

This has been a year of challenging economic times and need for CASAs has never been greater. As a 501(c)3 non-profit, CASA relies on community support to accomplish its mission. Less than 30% of the annual budget comes from state funding with the rest of the operating budget made up from grants and local fundraising. In this challenging year, the community showed its heart. Donations to CASA remained strong. ***Thank you so much for your continued generosity.***

May 1, 2009, CASA held its first annual auction fundraiser in memory of past director Michele Cotner. This function, held at the McMinnville Grand Ballroom, provided \$23,500 to support the work of CASA. This year's auction will be held at ***The Allison Inn & Spa*** in Newberg on ***April 30***. Tickets are \$75 and are on sale now. They may be purchased from the office or through the web at www.yccasa.org.

The fifth annual CASA golf tournament was held in June of 2009 at the Bayou Golf Club and enjoyed strong support, raising \$5000 to support CASA programs. This year's Golf Tournament will be held on Saturday, June 26, 2010. Mark your calendars.

The annual No Show Tea Party was mailed in December of 2009. This 2009 tea party was our most successful ever, grossing nearly \$6000.

From the Board:

It is an intense time for our current CASA Board of Directors. Spurred to action by the consistently fine work of our Director, Amy Bissonnette, our dynamic Volunteer Coordinator, Karen Willard, and 37 dynamite CASAs, as well as the now need of the 141 county children (43 being of highest priority) still waiting for a CASA, Bernie McGinnis, our Board Treasurer, has been the instigator for a new set of Board imperatives.

Bernie, with Amy's partnership, has reminded us that:

1. We need 17-18 new CASA volunteers to begin working with those kids who have highest need for our advocacy.
2. In order to be able to recruit and train those volunteers, we need to hire more staff.
3. With added volunteer CASAs, as well as staff, we will need a larger office space.
4. To support all of these needs amid the probability of reduced state funding, we must find new sources of revenue—from grants, with multiple fund-raising activities, and from generous community members who might be willing to donate to our cause, either on a one-time only basis or with a monthly sustaining donation.
5. Finally, bringing additional Board members to our 9-person group could bring a spate of new ideas, contacts, and energy to our efforts.

Board meetings for the past several months have included lively dialogue and intense thought and planning, through these imperatives, about how to reach our goal of "A CASA for Every Child" in need.

Also, we must mention our current and quite exciting fund-raising project - our annual CASA Auction and Dinner Dance to be held at the beautiful Allison Inn and Spa in Newberg on April 30. Spearheaded by our creative and indefatigable CASA volunteer, Deb Beresford-Clagett, this year's event promises to be better than ever. Several Board members are meeting weekly with Deb and her auction committee in the planning of this event. All Board members are involved in securing donations for our live and silent auctions at that event. We are all looking forward to that evening and hope to see many of you readers there!

Carole Whitehead, Board Secretary

It behooves us to invite an even greater and more deeply committed body of supporters throughout the county to take part in our awesome endeavor to provide support for our county children who are living day after day in unsafe and abusive situations. In that regard, we have begun to plan for a "Yamhill County CASA Sustaining Circle." Our vision is to create a group of supporters, whom we know are already committed to our work as well as others who are just now learning of the opportunity, to coalesce into a funding source for the on-going operational expenses as well as the approaching expansion of our program. Currently we are finalizing plans for our May 26th launch of this "**Sustaining Circle.**" Please know that if your name appears on our invitation list, it is, first and foremost, an acknowledgment of your already expressed commitment to this work or, given the way you show up in the community, that we recognize that you would want to be included as a supporter. If you'd like to make sure your name is on our list, please call me, at 503 474-9345. More information will be forthcoming, but we hope that you will mark your calendars now!

Patriciafaye Marshall, Fundraising Chair



Help us keep you up to date on CASA and help us save trees

Email us: office@yccasa.org and we'll send your next CASAGRAM via email

Let us know if you've moved; we'll update your address for event invitations

The mission of Yamhill County CASA is to speak up for abused and neglected children who are under the jurisdiction of the court. Our philosophy is to provide quality advocacy for victims of Abuse and neglect and to seek safe permanent homes for our kids as quickly as possible.

Yamhill County CASA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Less than 30% of our annual budget comes from State funding. We rely on the generosity of organizations, foundations, and private individuals to fund our advocacy work on behalf of abused and neglected children.



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Upcoming Events

- ◆ April 3, 2010 Safe Kids Fair @ Juliette's House in McMinnville
- ◆ April 30, 2010 **Second Annual CASA Auction @ The Allison in Newberg**
- ◆ May 26, 2010 **CASA launches the Sustaining Circle**
- ◆ June 5, 2010 Safe Kids Fair @ the Armory in Newberg
- ◆ June 26, 2010 **Sixth Annual CASA Golf Tournament, Bayou Golf Club**

◆ Did you know that in Yamhill County in 2009

◆ CASA volunteers donated over 3016 hours and more than 14,000 miles of unpaid advocacy

◆ There were 291 children eligible for a CASA

◆ There were 140 children served by a CASA (48%)

Court Appointed Special Advocates
CASA
 FOR CHILDREN
 YAMHILL COUNTY
 117 NE 5th St. Suite 1
 McMinnville, OR 97128
 Return Service Requested



NON-PROFIT ORG
 U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 McMinnville, OR
 PERMIT NO 135