

The CASA Brief

A Newsletter for Volunteers, Friends and Supporters of Douglas County CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children - OCTOBER 2009



Photo by Kevin Anderson, *Lawrence Journal-World*. Pictured above and below are CASA volunteer Marty Smith and 8-year-old Shane Lewis. Marty was Shane's CASA volunteer for 4 years.

Douglas County CASA Volunteer and Child Share Their Story

If the photograph above looks familiar, there's a good reason. The September 27 edition of the *Lawrence Journal-World* included an inspiring feature about mentors, one of the many hats worn by a CASA volunteer. Among the individuals profiled in this series was CASA volunteer **Marty Smith** (see "**CASA volunteer helps mother, son reunite**": <http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2009/sep/27/casa/>).

Confidentiality prohibits CASA staff and volunteers from sharing information about the children we serve, but Shane's mother, Robin Lewis, graciously gave her permission for this newspaper feature, helping increase awareness about the important role a CASA volunteer plays in the lives of children during a challenging time. Robin's support and candor are greatly appreciated.

**"Marty was the only one who stuck through the whole process."
- Robin Lewis**



Despite cerebral palsy and years in foster care, Shane has a winning smile and sparkling eyes, revealing the love and positive energy he exudes. Now happily reunited with his mother, Shane continues to melt the hearts of those around him, inspiring others with his determination and charm. Be sure to read the *Lawrence Journal-World* feature online for more details.

CASA Kids Art Contest: My Dreamhouse

Our CASA Kids Art Contest resulted in 5 winning entries from children ages 6-11. The young artists are all winners, but the overall winner selected by the CASA staff and Board of Directors is pictured at the top. The artist is a 10-year-old girl. We look forward to framing this meaningful artwork and displaying it in the CASA office!



Volunteers Serve as CASA Ambassadors at “Main Street Live” in South Park



Pictured above (from left to right) are CASA Volunteers **Ken Phipps, Katie Becker, Lee Ann Duver and Bob Duver**. This dedicated CASA crew hosted our agency’s display table in South Park on September 23rd during the “Main Street Live” tour which included a 6News live half-hour newscast.



WITH SYMPATHY ... In Memory Of Lucille Porto - 1925-2009

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to CASA staff member **Carolyn Johnson** and her family following the sudden death of Carolyn’s mother, Lucille Porto. Carolyn’s mother died on September 27 in West Des Moines, Iowa. As her obituary states, Lucille “loved the simple things in life like lilacs, bittersweet and Jim Croce. Most often found in her kitchen, her garden or playing cards, she had the ability to make everyone feel at home. She understood that before you could mend someone’s heart you had to make sure that they had a full stomach.”

A Lucille Porto Memorial Fund has been established at Douglas County CASA. Our thoughts are with Carolyn and her family during this difficult time.



Make a Difference in the Lives that Follow – Consider a Planned Gift to Douglas County CASA



National CASA Staff Spotlight: Terra Gay

- from the National CASA e-newsletter -

Terra Gay, the new older youth specialist, will coordinate and guide *Fostering Futures*, National CASAs new initiative funded by the Wal-Mart Foundation. This program will engage CASA volunteers as advocates for and advisors to foster youth, with the goal of helping them develop specific transition plans, identify positive adult connections and achieve positive outcomes following their transition out of care.



Terra has a passion for making a positive difference in the lives of young people. Most recently, she was associate director of school programs for Hands On Atlanta. While in college, Terra served in schools as a mentor and tutor, which led her to a decade with the AmeriCorps and VISTA programs. Working within the alternative education system also sparked her desire to become a greater advocate for young displaced people. For the past 15 years, Terra has worked directly with youth as an educator, certified leadership development trainer and both community and youth advocate. In her new role, she says, "I would like to use the expertise I have gained from years of community asset mapping, community building and building corporate partnerships with schools and local agencies. All of this can support increasing resources and opportunities for expansion for every site that implements the *Fostering Futures* program throughout the country."

Douglas County CASA is proud to be a United Way agency.



The 2009-2010 United Way Campaign is officially underway. We hope you will join the CASA staff in supporting the United Way.

**Scot and Jane Buxton
2009-2010 Campaign Chairs**



"Our theme for this year is **LIVE UNITED**. It's about each of us doing what we can to help others throughout Douglas County. We invite you to be part of the change. Together, united, we can inspire hope and create opportunities for a better tomorrow."

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

Donations to Douglas County CASA are always welcome and greatly appreciated. Send your tax-deductible contribution to Douglas County CASA, 1100 Massachusetts, Suite 302, Lawrence, KS 66044. Or donate online at www.dccasa.org. Be the difference between abuse and hope.

CASA WISH LIST: backpacks, diaper bags, blankets, journals, pens, small bags for toiletries

The Advocate

A special section for our Douglas County CASA Volunteers



CASA volunteers and staff share a smile at the welcome reception for new volunteer supervisor Elizabeth Day. The gathering was held at the home of Sherry Catt on September 29. Pictured from left to right are Tracy Harrison, Georgia Orchard, Pat Lechtenberg, Lis Niswonger, Sherry Catt, Marty Smith, San Dee Nossaman, Katie Becker, Sue Richardson, Elizabeth Day, Marcus Merritt and Diana Frederick. At right is a “colossal cookie” with the CASA logo to welcome Elizabeth.

CASA Volunteer News and Reminders ...

- **Tuesday, October 27, 5:30 pm** – Volunteer In-Service. Janice Storey from Bert Nash Mental Health Center will explain SED Waivers (tools for helping children get mental health services). Location: McGrew Real Estate, 4100 W. 6th Street. Please RSVP to Elizabeth Day at eday@douglas-county.com.
- **Friday, December 11** – GAL trainings offered by Kansas Legal Services include sessions that may be helpful to CASA volunteers (e.g., how GALs can assist in a child’s IEP process at school; reducing re-offending risks for juvenile offenders). These sessions are in the morning of 12/11/09. If you are interested in attending, contact Marilyn Rohrer at 785-270-5669 or rohterm@klsinc.org. You will receive CASA in-service credit for your participation. If you have questions, please contact Elizabeth Day in the CASA office (832-5172 or eday@douglas-county.com)
- **Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) offers reimbursement for gas mileage.** Consider joining RSVP to receive reimbursement (40 cents per mile) for your transportation expenses as a CASA volunteer. Reimbursements are made as funding allows. RSVP information and reimbursement forms are available in the CASA office.
- **We are pleased to welcome Diane Mosher back to the CASA office following her knee replacement surgery.** Special thanks to Zee Button who provided office support while Diane was recuperating.

Douglas County CASA, Inc.

Board of Directors: Cara Nossaman Anderson, Mary Boatright (*Vice President*), Julia Butler, Mark Emert (*Secretary*), Beth Kelley, Brad Kemp, Eve Kemple, Jill LaPoint, Missy Martin (*President*), Karen Oberzan, Chris Phalen (*Treasurer*), Lisa Ramler, Ruthi Rapp, Becca Braun (*Kappa Alpha Theta*)

Staff: Diana Frederick, *Executive Director*; Sherry Catt, *Volunteer Supervisor*; Elizabeth Day, *Volunteer Supervisor*; Carolyn Johnson, *Volunteer Supervisor*; Diane Mosher, *Administrative Assistant*

Contact Information: Douglas County CASA, Inc., 1100 Massachusetts St., Suite 302, Lawrence, KS 66044; Phone: 785-832-5172; Fax: 785-832-5359; E-mail: casa@douglas-county.com; Web site: www.dccasa.org; for newsletter questions or suggestions, please contact Diana Frederick at dfrederick@douglas-county.com.

Our Mission:

CASA strives to ensure that children of Douglas County grow up in safe, permanent and loving homes by advocating for the best interests of children who have been abused or neglected and are under the protection of the Juvenile court.



Douglas County CASA, Inc.
1100 Massachusetts Street, Suite 302
Lawrence, KS 66044