



# CASA Connection

Volume 8: Issue 5

Abuse Hotline  
1-800-222-8000

May 2021

**Jackson County CASA, Inc.**  
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## CASA Blues

*6th Annual*

**CASA**   
**2021**  
**BLUES**

*Putting the music back in little lives!*

**PRESENTED BY**  
**JACKSON COUNTY CASA, INC.**  
**JACKSON COUNTY CIVIC CENTER**  
**2902 SHORTCUT ROAD**  
**PASCAGOULA, MS 39567**

**JUNE 11, 2021 • 6:00 P.M. – 10:00 P.M.**

**A FUN PARTY WITH FOOD, DRINKS, MUSIC AND SILENT AUCTION**  
**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TICKETS CONTACT CASA 228-762-7370**

*Featuring music by*  
**N2 BLUE BAND**

**TICKETS - \$68.00 PER PERSON**

An agency of United Way for Jackson and George Counties since 1999



## Court Dates

Your Court date is **very important**. Your **presence is needed** at all Court hearings. However, if you are unavailable to attend, please contact the CASA office and provide an update of your case. CASA staff will present your report to the Court. **Your input is essential. Your child/children are counting on you to provide a voice in Court. Please review the schedule carefully. If you have any questions, contact any staff for assistance.**

Confidential

Information unavailable

## Foster Care Review

County Conferences are held every six months to discuss and review the permanent plan of the child/children in foster care. Your attendance and input is requested. The review is **NOT** a court hearing, however, the testimony delivered during the conference will be provided to the Court to aid in making decisions about the child's best interest. **Please contact the CASA staff if you are not able to attend.**

Confidential

Information unavailable

## Latest Program Statistics

JC CASA is a volunteer-powered organization that advocates for the abused and neglected children of our county. We have an amazing group of dedicated volunteers that provide a voice for these children throughout their court process. As of March 31, 2021, **92 Volunteers** have served **155 children** from **87 families** with **1203 donated hours of service for the 2021 calendar year.**

## In-Service Dates for Volunteers

To maintain your CASA standing you are required to complete 12 hours of In-Service training each year. **Be sure to include any completed In-Service hours on your monthly reports.** We would like to discuss topics that would be beneficial to you. Please contact the CASA staff if you have special requests.

**NETFLIX** offers two movies that provide insight on some topics that affect many of our children and families.

**You Are My Home** follows the relationship of a heartbroken woman and a young immigrant girl who has lost her mother at the border, coming together just before Christmas. **7 Yards: The Chris Norton Story** tells an inspiring story of Chris Norton's journey to overcome a traumatic event and rebuild his life. If you choose to view one or both of these movies, you must provide a very brief report to your supervisor. **Contact your supervisor to request the simple report form.**

**Adopting Tiger**, by Chavis Fisher is a book about a 12 year old foster child, Tiger, that two families are fighting to adopt. Tiger has a wish. But, is it heard or drowned by an imperfect system? It is in the Judge's hands. What will he decide? Where will be Tiger's forever home? We have 2 copies of the book in the CASA office. **Call your supervisor to reserve the book and they will let you know when it is available.** The book is available on Kindle (\$7.95) or in paperback (\$10.95 new) on Amazon. If you choose to read this book, you must provide a very brief report to your supervisor. Contact your supervisor to request the simple report form.

**May 4, 11 and 13:** Our spring **Pre-Service Volunteer Training** will conclude this month with the induction of the new volunteers on May 13. For a refresher on your advocacy for our children, volunteers may audit any or all of the training sessions. This will provide you with in-service hours. For more information regarding the training, contact the CASA office or check our website, [www.jccasa.net](http://www.jccasa.net) for details.

**May 6:** National CASA will present a webinar, **Human Trafficking: The Impact of Pornography**, at 2:00 p.m. The training will equip the advocates with the knowledge of what entices young people to watch pornography, and its relationship to human trafficking. Additional topics to be covered include learning the ways pornography impacts the brain, the heart and the world.

**Registration link:** [https://nationalcasagal.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_g9ZsaVThTiWKyFatW0DCJA](https://nationalcasagal.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_g9ZsaVThTiWKyFatW0DCJA)

Additionally, many independent In-Service opportunities can be found on the our website, [www.jccasa.net](http://www.jccasa.net)

## May Birthdays

**MAY 5**  
Lucy Newman

**May 7**  
Johnathan Sherman

**May 10**  
Drea Tarity  
Judy Schneider  
Christian Young

**May 12**  
Dobbs Dennis

**May 16**  
Shelly Ferguson

**May 22**  
Lindsey O'Connell

**May 27**  
Stephanie Coghlan  
Samantha Lucas-Ringl

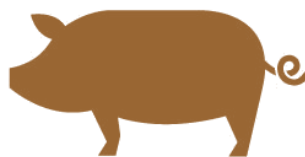
**May 28**  
Sharon Sigalas





## BBQ Pork Butt Fundraiser—Pickup May 8

The last day to order a BBQ pork butt was April 30. It may not be too late. If you are still interested in purchasing one, contact the CASA office. 228-762-7370



Pick-up May 8  
1:00 to 3:00 p.m.  
Hard Tails 228-219-1067  
4100 Clark Street,  
Pascagoula

## Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month



April was a very busy month. There were a lot of activities and events that were centered around it being Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month. We began the month by initiating Wednesday as the day to wear blue. Blue signifies the color of the bruises from the abuse that is suffered by so many children. Our staff, volunteers, board members, Youth Court staff and community came together to show support on Wear Blue Wednesday's. Many thanks to everyone who joined us in this effort to bring awareness. See photos on pages 7-9.



We are overwhelmed with the support we received for our mission from Jackson County. The Board of Supervisors proclaimed April as Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month at their board meeting on April 5. On April 6 Gautier, Moss Point and Pascagoula followed with Ocean Springs declaring their proclamation on April 7. It is an honor to stand for the abused and neglected children of Jackson County, and it makes us proud to see our cities standing with us in support of our mission. The proclamations are now hung proudly in our office as a constant reminder of our cities' constant support.



## Sweet Tea and Me, Celebrating Permanency

*Sweet Tea & Me*, a dinner celebrating permanency for some very deserving children, was held at Caswell Springs United Methodist Church in Moss Point on April 17. The dinner celebration was hosted by Jackson County CASA and Jackson County Juvenile Intervention. The event celebrated families that achieved reunification and families that adopted foster children. The families provided safe, loving and forever homes for the children. Youth Court Judge, the Honorable Sharon Sigalas, welcomed the guests. The Honorable Randy Pierce served as Master of Ceremonies. The evening's entertainment was provided by Jadyen Cripps and Chelsea Riches. Shelly Eubanks, former foster parent, and Mrs. Mississippi American, 2020, were the guest speakers. JC CASA, Executive Director, Frances Allsup closed the evening with thanks to the many sponsors that helped to make the evening possible. The sponsors:

Bacot McCarty Foundation—In memory of Emily Weber

Elizabeth Feder-Hosey Ernie & Christie Lewelling Snaparazzi Photobooth, Leo Ridge  
Melanie Allen Stacie Zorn Armer & Tristan Armer Mike Ezell Fostering by Faith Island Winds Title Co.  
Junior Auxiliary of Pascagoula-Moss Point Miller Law Offices, PLLC Southern Oaks Realty Taylor Law Firm  
Brandon Riches

Doug Adams Allen Beverages, Inc. Rusty Anderson Anonymous Bunny Bread Inc. Dad's Super Pawn, Inc.  
Mark Riley McCormick Law Firm Mississippi Security Police Jeffrey G. Pierce, PLLC Law Office  
Rainbow Spring Water

The Shed Tay's BBQ Tony's Smokehouse & Catering

An agency of United Way for Jackson and George Counties since 1999



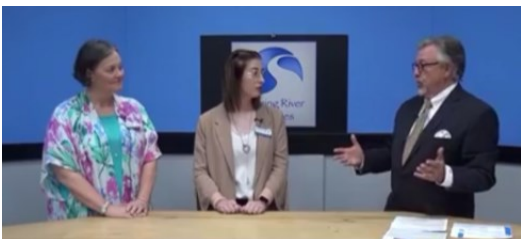
## FYI



Living United Show, Sarah & Donna



Frances welcomes "Friday Feature"



Beverly, Sarah and Dr. Blackwell



Lunch with Bombshell Businesswomen



CASA ladies enjoy Sweet Tea & Me

We joined our friends at United Way of Jackson and George counties on April 1 for their weekly, "Living United" show with Donna Stewart, Chief Operations Officer. We chatted about Child Abuse Awareness month and all of our exciting upcoming events. We are a proud agency of United Way and were thankful to be invited to join them! Keep your eye out for CASA on another, "Living United" show in July!

We were so honored to be Jackson County Chamber of Commerce's choice for their "Friday Feature", a Facebook live event that helps promote local businesses and non profits. On April 9, Taylor Sublett, the Chamber's Membership and Event Manager, Catherine Raynal and Chamber Ambassador John Parker interviewed the staff while touring the office. The "Friday Feature" provided an opportunity for us to showcase our new office while sharing our mission with a wide audience. We are so grateful for the Chamber's support of our mission.

On April 12, Mentoring Coordinators Beverly Goff & Sarah Young joined our friends at WGUD TV for a brief segment on the Singing River Services show to discuss our CASA mission and upcoming events. The show's host, Dr. Sherman Blackwell, inquisitively asked questions concerning our day to day operations and the numbers of child abuse cases reported as a whole. If you missed this last segment, do not fret! Beverly and Sarah will be joining Dr. Blackwell once again on May 24.

Also, on April 12, Angela Mallett, Executive Director of "End It for Good," gave an in-service on *Understanding Childhood Trauma* via zoom. The webinar focused on how childhood trauma can have far-reaching effects on a child's life, even into adulthood. Participants learned that left untreated, traumas inflicted early on will almost always hinder successful developmental growth. Additionally, she provided us with building blocks that will help us recognize when a child has likely experienced some form of trauma and suggestions of ways that our volunteers can help them overcome. Ms. Mallett returned on April 26 via zoom to give the second installment of her Trauma in-service, *Building Resiliency*. This second lesson built on the first one. It focused on honing the skills we learned in the *Understanding Childhood Trauma* webinar. Participants learned how to approach and overcome hurdles and struggles that make it difficult to reach victims of childhood trauma.

On April 13, Jonathan Mills, CASA Advocate Supervisor, joined the Youth Court staff at a state-wide training, the *Power of Hope*, a three-part training program. Dr. Chan Hellman, Ph.D., a leading researcher in the *Power of Hope*, is dedicated to improving the lives of impoverished children and families who have experienced abuse and neglect. The court-focused training programs where he presented are themselves a hope, realized by Justice Dawn Beam, co-chair of the state's Commission on Children's Justice. "There is this real thirst for how we can make systemic change in our state," Justice Beam said as she introduced Hellman at the first session. "Hope is a better predictor of college success than the ACT or SAT score," commented Dr. Hellman. This first training session on the *Power of Hope* was shared with over 1200 members from the Youth courts in Mississippi.

On April 14<sup>th</sup> we hosted a brown bag luncheon with the Bombshell Businesswomen group. It was a wonderful lunch networking with the Anchored Hearts Community Resource organization. We want to thank Lisa Cannon, one of the Bombshell Businesswomen and a CASA board Member, for setting up this luncheon.



## FYI Continues



April 15 was a very special day for Jackson County CASA. In our advocacy for children, permanency is always our goal. After four years in foster care, permanency was finally achieved for Aden, one of our kids. Beverly Goff, his CASA volunteer, now CASA staff, was invited to be a part of the adoption ceremony in Chancery Court. Beverly said, "To see the smiling faces of Aden and his new parents was such an incredible experience".

April 19—25 was National Volunteer Appreciation Week. We are very grateful to have 92 wonderful volunteers and many dedicated Friends of CASA that are devoted to our mission and the children we serve. Once again, we want to thank them for their service to the abused and neglected children of our county and for all the things they do to help make our jobs a little easier. We are planning a celebration event for our volunteers in November. We have the best volunteers!

We had a blast at *Glory Bound Gyro Company's* Trivia Night on April 20. *Glory Bound* graciously hosted us as they shared our mission with the participants alongside the trivia questions. We hung out, tested our trivia knowledge, and spoke with interested parties about CASA. Staff, volunteers and Friends of CASA Frances & Jimmy Allsup, Beverly & Madison Goff, Stephanie Coghlan, Craig Guy, Erin Kramer, Lindsey O'Connell, Mark & Pam Roberts, Paige & Jeff Watson and Sarah & Christian Young joined in on the fun. If you missed Trivia Night on April 20, you can join us on May 11 at 7:00 p.m. at *Glory Bound Gyro Company* in Ocean Springs. See you there!

### HAVING FUN AT GLORY BOUND GYRO COMPANY'S TRIVIA NIGHT



April 21, the CASA staff attended the National Crime Victim's Event, hosted by the District Attorney's office at the M & M Bank courtyard in downtown Pascagoula. Frances Allsup, CASA Executive Director told the story of how the blue ribbon came to be the symbol of child abuse: blue is the color of the bruises caused by abuse. She also talked



about the impact a CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) makes in changing a child's story. Staff passed out blue ribbons to all in attendance, and thanked our law enforcement and the District Attorney office of Jackson, George and Greene Counties for all that they do for our children.

We are so excited to have a new CASA sign for our entry hall and CASA cover for our event cart. The items were custom made by our Friend of CASA, Trey Lynn and his six-year old son, Conner. Trey created the signs and Conner helped his daddy with the painting. They did an amazing job! Thank you Trey and Conner for making such beautiful CASA artwork.



## Child Abuse Awareness—Wear Blue Wednesday

Throughout the month of April, we asked our staff, volunteers and friends throughout the county to wear blue on Wednesday to bring awareness to April as Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention month. Take a look at some of the supporters of our mission that participated in our awareness efforts. Thank you!





## More Wear Blue Wednesday Pictures





## More Wear Blue Wednesday Pictures



*Thank you for helping us with our efforts to bring awareness to April as Child Abuse and Prevention Month.*

*We appreciate your support of our mission, providing a voice for abused and neglected children in the Youth Court system.*

*The CASA Staff,  
Frances, Brenda, Angela, Beverly, Jonathan, Mark, Sarah and  
Julia (not pictured)*