

# CASA Connection

Volume 9: Issue 1

**Abuse Hotline 1-800-222-8000** 

January 2022

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### www.jccasa.net



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### **Inside this issue:**

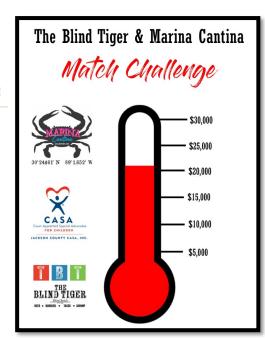
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# The Blind Tiger and Marina Cantina Donation Match Challenge

Jackson County CASA's newest friend Thomas Genin owner of The Blind Tiger Bay St. Louis and Marina Cantina Gulfport generously offered to match donations received throughout the month of December, up to \$5,000! Our staff set out to raise \$30,000! We knew this was a massive goal, but we had such tremendous faith in our generous community, we believed any goal was possible! With a little help from our friends, we had amazing community members create videos sharing about our awesome mission, and our goals for the match challenge.

We're excited to announce the final tally for The Blind Tiger Bay St. Louis and the Marina Cantina Gulfport Match Challenge! Our community stepped up to the plate and raised over \$16,000! With the \$5,000 match included, \$21,096.12 has been successfully provided to help the abused and neglected children CASA volunteers serve in Jackson County. Donations to our mission directly impact lives and empower our volunteers to be a voice for their children in court. Even though we did not reach our \$30,000 goal, we are more than grateful for our wonderful community support, as well as the generous individuals at The Blind Tiger Bay St. Louis and the Marina Cantina Gulfport, especially owner Thomas Genin.

We are grateful to our loyal supporters that helped in our efforts by providing a short video to help promote this wonderful fundraising opportunity. Individuals such as Lazaro Rovira, the Honorable Stacie Zorn, Senator Brice Wiggins, Tee McCovey, Lee Bond, and Mark Scott all joined in on the fun through their videos. Here are some of the amazing things each had to say.



"There is no more noble undertaking than caring for neglected and abused children."- Mark Scott, Director, Community Relations and Government Affairs, VT Halter Marine

"Think about your childhood for a moment, imagine what it would have been like if you were abused or neglected. Put yourselves in the shoes of a child. And then think for a moment what it would have been like if you had an advocate for you during that time. That's what CASA does."- Lee Bond, CEO, Singing River Hospital

"CASA provides a special service to our children that is really needed-- also to our Judges and lawyers, and we're proud to support CASA."- Senator Brice Wiggins

"What is a CASA? A CASA is a Court Appointed Special Advocate appointed by the youth court to represent the best interest of the children who are temporarily removed from their homes due to abuse and neglect in the youth court system. CASA Volunteers literally Change Children's Stories."-Honorable Stacie Zorn, CASA Volunteer

United Way

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# **Angels of CASA**

Our CASA children had a wonderful Christmas! This would not have been possible without the kindness and generosity of our community supporters. Numerous Jackson County businesses, organizations, and individual citizens made contributions that ensured the holiday season would be extra special for the deserving children we serve. They are truly CASA Angels!

We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to each of the following supporters for their donations to our children. There is no way that they could ever know how much their donation, no matter how large or small, has meant to the children and each of us at Jackson County CASA, Inc. We wish we could show you the beautiful smiles on the children's faces as they opened their gifts, but we can't. So just know that your kindness and generosity is deeply appreciated.

### **OUR SPECIAL CHRISTMAS ANGELS**

American Business Women Association • Barnes & Noble, Gulfport

Samantha Bignell • Boy Scout Troop 512 • Burnham Drugs, Moss Point

Chelsea Campbell, True Growth Strength and Conditioning • Lisa & Ashton Cannon

Chevron Refinery, Operation Candy Cane

Dixie Dart Association • Friendship Civic Club of Ocean Springs • Gautier Rotary Club

The Golden Nugget staff and employees

Gulf Coast Association of Realtors • Gulf Coast Equality Council

Hancock Whitney Banks: (Gulfport–Elizabeth Harwell and Alana Barnette-Woods,

Ocean Springs East-Renee Selman & Ocean Springs Washington Ave.-Laurie Godfrey)

Ingalls Shipbuilding, IT Department • Jackson-George Regional Library System

Junior Auxiliary of Biloxi - Ocean Springs

Junior Auxiliary of Moss Point - Pascagoula

Keesler Federal Credit Union, Gulfport • J. Donald Matherne, Ph.D.

Carol & Steve Messer • MGCCC Honor Society

Mississippi Business Women

Ocean Springs Poor Man's Yacht Club • Jennifer Bates Presley

Tracy Scott & family • Cynthia & Larry Wilson Zachry Care Team

Many Anonymous Donors

### THANK YOU



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# Jackson County CASA, Inc. 2022 WINTER VOLUNTEER TRAINING

**Overview: Part 1** 

January 11 6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.

**Overview: Part 2** 

January 13 6:00 p.m. —7:30 p.m.

The Bleux Case

January 18 6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.

The Green Case

January 25 6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.

**The Amarillo Case** 

February 1 6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.

The Redd Case

February 8 6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.

**Wrap-up and Optima Training** 

February 15 6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.

INDUCTION

To Be Scheduled

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# **Latest Program Statistics**

JC CASA is a volunteer–powered organization that advocates for the abused and neglected children of Jackson County. We have an amazing group of dedicated volunteers that provide a voice for these children throughout their court process. As of November 30, 2021, **110 Volunteers** have served **210 children** from **123 families** with **4729 donated hours of service during the 2021 calendar year.** 

# **CASA Christmas**

Three members of the Friendship Civic Club of Ocean Springs dropped by the office on December 3 to deliver gifts for two very special children the club members adopted for Christmas. The car was filled with beautifully wrapped packages which will be given to these lucky little ones on Christmas morning. Members have been dedicated supporters of the CASA program throughout the year. They also left off some much needed gift cards in case Santa encountered some special needs as the holidays drew closer.





Samantha Bignell, CASA governing board member, came by and presented an amazing donation of toys collected by Keesler Federal Credit Union to Executive Director, Frances Allsup. In addition, Samantha returned on December 20 to deliver gifts of sports equipment, backpacks, and school supplies which will help some deserving children as they return to school in 2022.



On December 5, Bri Ricks, CASA volunteer, and Jonathan Mills, Advocate Supervisor, attended Christmas Brunch at Centennial Plaza in Gulfport. Members of the Gulf Coast Equality Council presented them with a \$300 check for Jackson County CASA and provided items collected during their Christmas Toy Drive. We are so lucky to receive this special help especially during the holiday season. It enabled many children we serve to have their Christmas wishes come true.



Frances Allsup, Executive Director, and Patty Waters, CASA volunteer, were invited to attend the MBW Christmas party in Ocean Springs on the night of December 7. As part of the evening, they shared recent news about CASA events and training. The members presented them with Christmas gifts for the seven children the group had adopted for Christmas. A wonderful evening—filled with good food, fun, and outstanding fellowship!



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### **CASA Christmas Continues**



Tracy Scott came by the office on December 16 to to drop off donations of toys and gifts for our CASA children. Her son, Micah, a seventh grader at RCMS, proudly posed for a picture. Tracy and her mother, Karen Keel, have been long-time supporters of our CASA children during back-to-school events and Christmas. These donations were eagerly received as volunteers and foster parents shopped for their young-sters looking for just the right gifts to make this Christmas special.

December 15, several of the Zachry Care Team members dropped off a variety of items the group had purchased to be used as stocking stuffers for our youngest babies (age 4 and under). The team members had a great time selecting the cute, fun items and are always eager to help whenever anything is needed. At the Holiday Happening, volunteers and fosters quickly grabbed up these small gifts for the children.







On December 14, just in time for the Holiday Happening, Chevron employees arrived in two shifts loaded down with giant bags of gifts for 90 of our CASA children sponsored as part of Operation Candy Cane 2021. Special thanks to Maddie Bonifay who coordinating this year's program. The halls, the training room, and individual offices were quickly filled to overflowing with presents that would have brought a huge smile to old Santa himself!

Even with current supply issues, all styles and types of bikes and tricycles filled the training room. Cody made two deliveries on behalf of the Chevron employees with items selected and tagged for individual children. In addition, the Poor Man's Yacht Club of Ocean Springs provided additional wheels for other children who welcomed them as Christmas surprises.



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# **CASA Christmas Continues**



Long-time supporters of the CASA Christmas program, the employees of the Golden Nugget outdid themselves this year by providing beautifully bagged items tagged especially for the 25 children they sponsored. Billy McCasland and Larry Fowler, CASA volunteers, and Tanya Fowler, Governing Board Member, helped by picking up these gifts and delivering them to the former Drug Court building for storage until the day of the Holiday Happening.

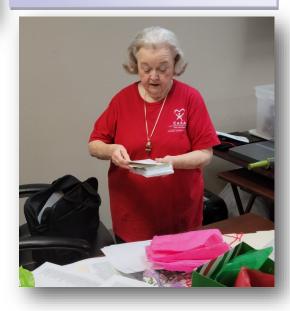


Staff, volunteers, and fosters look forward to the Holiday Happening event each December. It follows literally months of hard work as volunteers gather the Christmas lists and turn them in for Santa to pass along to the eager sponsors scattered throughout the community. The day finally arrived, and the weather cooperated (albeit a little warm for some) for a perfect afternoon under the big blue CASA tent. Holiday cookies, cold drinks and water, and wonderful visits were shared as folks dropped by to pick up Christmas gifts for the children. In addition, volunteers and fosters were able to select those special additional items for Christmas gift giving. The selection was tremendous and ranged from new books, games, puzzles, baby dolls, trucks and stuffed animals to bikes and scooters. All the grownups left with big smiles as they eagerly loaded the gifts for delivery. Special thanks to Renee' Shaw, governing board member, and Stacey Dugger, CASA volunteer, for helping the volunteers and fosters with selecting additional items and loading the packages in their cars.

The CASA staff expresses a special thank you to our own Mrs. Clause, volunteer Patty Waters. Our beloved Ms. Patty organized CASA Christmas and made sure everything was ready for the Holiday Happening.

Mrs. Clause praised two dedicated elves, CASA volunteers, Suzanne Delarosa and Lucy Hurst-Gordon, for their help with making CASA Christmas run so smoothly.

Mrs. Clause, we are certain, is vacationing in the Caribbean—relaxing under a palm tree and enjoying the tropical breeze.

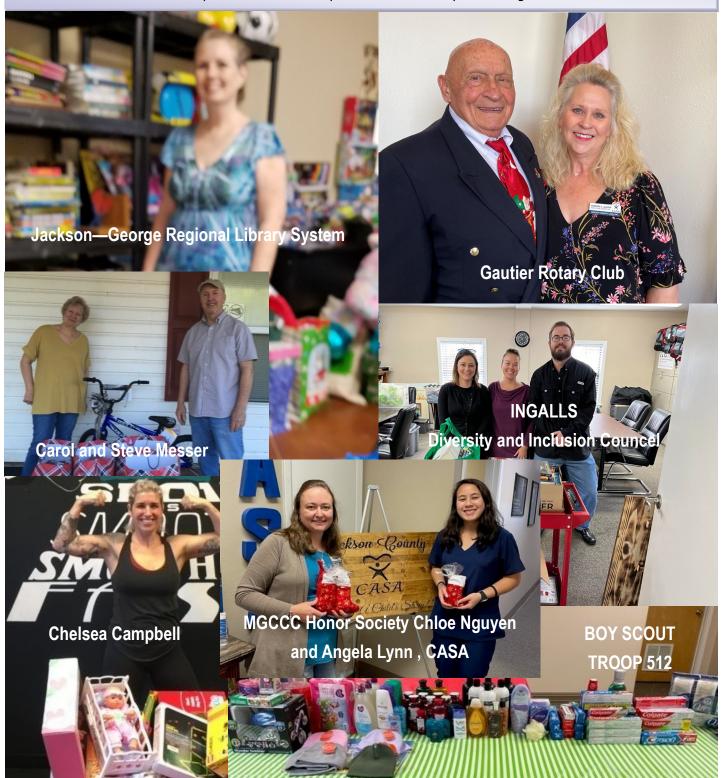




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# **CASA Christmas Continues**

Many thanks to all of the businesses, organizations and individuals that sponsored children and the donors that made contributions to help make Christmas special for some very deserving children.



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### **CASA Christmas Continues**



**December 8, the JC CASA Governing Board and Honorable Sharon Sigalas joined the CASA staff for a holiday luncheon.** Prepared by the CASA staff, the meal included turkey and ham, donated by Wayne Lee's and prepared by Angela Lynn, Advocated Supervisor, and her husband and volunteer Trey. Each guest was presented with a gift of assorted holiday treats, also prepared by the staff. Thanks to The Citizens Bank in Pascagoula for the use of their wonderful conference room to host the event.



Last year, the staff was not able to hold its annual Christmas party and gift exchange due to all being quarantined with COVID. Yes, all the staff had COVID! This year we were able to get together for a special luncheon and celebrate the holiday season, thanks to board member Doug Adams who graciously treated us to lunch from Bozo's.



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# **CASA Staff Participate in TBRI® Training**

On December 9th and 10th, CASA staff participated in TBRI training at the Gulf Park Campus of the University of Southern Mississippi hosted by CASA of Hancock County and the youth court judges of Harrison and Hancock counties. TBRI stands for Trust-Based Relational Intervention. TBRI® is an attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention that is designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children. TBRI® uses Empowering Principles to address physical needs, Connecting Principles for attachment needs, and Correcting Principles to disarm fear-based behaviors. While the intervention is based on years of attachment, sensory processing, and neuroscience research, the heartbeat of TBRI® is connection.

TBRI training is conducted exclusively through Texas Christian University and the Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development. The presenters were Daren Jones and Amanda Purvis with KPICD. TBRI® is used worldwide in homes, residential facilities, group homes, schools, camps, juvenile justice facilities, courts, clinical practices, faith communities, and with law enforcement and survivors of sex trafficking. The staff gained a plethora of knowledge which will enable them to assist their volunteers and the children and families on their cases and cannot wait for Practitioner training in July!



# January Birthdays

**January 1**Rhonda Massey



January 6 Cathy Wildschuetz

# Ring Out The Old and Bring In The New



"Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every New Year find you a better person." Benjamin Franklin

Change a Child's Story ®

