



# CASA Connection

Volume 9: Issue 9

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

September 2022

**CASA OF SOUTHEAST MISSISSIPPI, Inc.**  
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Doug Adams  
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John Mosley, Jr.  
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Brandon Riches  
Rene' Shaw  
Sherri Hodges-Thornton

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## CASA OF SOUTHEAST MISSISSIPPI

# CHANGE A CHILD'S STORY.™



**CASA**  
Court Appointed Special Advocates  
**FOR CHILDREN**

**SOUTHEAST MISSISSIPPI**

In 1985, Jackson County became the site of the first CASA program in Mississippi when Judge Emily Baker recognized both the need for and benefits of CASA volunteers in the Youth Court process. In April 2017, Mississippi House Bill 1213 was passed authorizing the Youth Court to utilize trained CASA advocates to work on behalf of the child in abuse and neglect cases. Today, the National CASA Association represents 950 local programs across the country served by over 58,000 advocate volunteers devoted to child victims who need someone to stand up for them in court to change each child's story. As of June 2022, seven counties in Mississippi had a CASA program. With July, that number officially grew to nine counties with the addition of George and Greene Counties now served by CASA of Southeast Mississippi, Inc. New name — same great services Jackson County CASA, Inc. has provided for the past 37 years will now be available to the children in foster care who have been victims of abuse and neglect in the tri-county area.

This is truly a dream-come-true day for Executive Director Frances Allsup who returned to Jackson County CASA in 2006. She visualized additional communities coming together to fulfill CASA's mission, to be a voice for child victims. When the local program goal of serving more than 90% of the children in custody was finally reached in 2021, Frances embraced the challenge to expand the CASA footprint so that more children could be served. The members of the Governing Board provided support to the expansion venture and the journey began. The final step was getting official expansion approval from the National CASA Association.

The CASA staff and the Governing Board of CASA of Southeast Mississippi hosted a lunch meeting at the East Central Community Center on August 24th to introduce the organization and give a brief overview of the CASA mission, staff, and board to the current Youth Court Judges of George, Greene, and Jackson Counties. On hand for the event were Judge Keith Miller, Judge Calvin Taylor, Referee Cheryl Pierce, and CASA Board Members: Doug Adams, Samantha Bignell, Lisa Cannon, Mollie Hillburn, Derek McCoy, Jeff Pierce, Brandon Riches, and Rene' Shaw.

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



## FYI

On July 30, **Mark Roberts** visited with the members of the **Dixie Dart** group in Ocean Springs and collected over 20 new, filled backpacks they had prepared for the foster children CASA serves. This dedicated group is a year-round supporter of the CASA mission and work hard to provide items the foster children and their families need.

Mark your calendars - the **Dixie Dart Holiday Charity Dart Tournament** is scheduled for Saturday, **November 12**, at the VFW Post 5699 in Ocean Springs. Proceeds from this tournament will benefit CASA of Southeast Mississippi (formerly Jackson County CASA), their designated charity of choice.



Pictured are some of the children, staff, and families from this summer's **Caswell Springs United Methodist Church Vacation Bible School**. This awesome group of youngsters chose to make a donation to CASA and worked very hard to collect \$ 716.74 to support the CASA mission. Faith in action, with children helping children, what a wonderful difference your gift will make!



## FYI



(Pictured above) Thank you to **Golden Nugget Casino** of Biloxi for donating several cases of bottled water for the fridge in the CASA office. Pictured with Advocate Supervisor **Beverly Goff** is **Claudia Bourgeois** of the **Golden Nugget**. Make sure you stop by the training room and help yourself when you come for

(Pictured below) **Dayton Ruse**, **Leah Mims**, with MGCCC Student Services, and CASA Executive Director **Frances Allsup** met for planning the September 8 special reception to be held at the Multipurpose Education Facility on the MGCCC Lucedale campus to officially welcome CASA of Southeast Mississippi to George and Greene Counties.



(Pictured at left) **Anna Scovel**, the wonderful CASA web designer, did a staff training session to make sure everyone on staff was comfortable posting items on the website to ensure the program's information is kept timely and up to date. **Anna** does a tremendous job of maintaining the website for CASA of Southeast Mississippi.



(Pictured at right) On August 15, **Glory Bound Gyro Company** in Ocean Springs donated 10% of their profits from 3 – 9 p.m. to the United Way for Jackson and George Counties. **Beverly Goff**, CASA Advocate Supervisor, stopped by to enjoy some of their delicious food. She is pictured with **Emily Carroll**, manager of Glory Bound. Thanks to all who came out to support United Way and CASA while enjoying a great meal!



## Continuing Education Opportunities

**Reminder— to maintain your CASA standing, you are required to complete 12 hours of Continuing Education training each year. Be sure to include any completed Continuing Education hours on your monthly activity reports that are submitted in OPTIMA.** We would like to add additional topics that would be beneficial to you as a volunteer. Please contact the CASA staff if you have special requests.

**Continuing Education Opportunity: Introduction to TBRI** (Trust-Based Relational Intervention) with Advocate Supervisor and TBRI Practitioner **Angela Lynn** is designed to give a glimpse of what this intervention program can provide to caregivers and those working with children who have experienced abuse, neglect, and/or other trauma. This will offer participants a brief introduction to trauma-informed intervention that is designed to meet the complex needs of these vulnerable children. The first introductory training will be presented on **September 13th** from 9—11am; on **September 19th** from 1:30—3:30 pm; and on **September 22** from 5—7 pm. Call, email, or text today to reserve your choice of day and time! See flyer on page 7.

**Book Selection for the month: Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine, by Gail Honeyman**

At age 29, Eleanor Oliphant has built an utterly solitary life that almost works. After a mysterious event in her childhood that left half her face badly scarred, she was raised in foster care, spent her college years in an abusive relationship, and is now, as the title states, perfectly fine. As the survivor of childhood trauma, Eleanor with her often-humorous internal monologue has something to say about everything. During the week, she toils in an office—don't inquire further and in almost eight years no one has. She has never had a manicure or a haircut, worn high heels, had anyone visit her apartment, or even had a friend. Her extreme social awkwardness has made her the target of nasty jokes among her colleagues, which don't seem to bother her much, though one notices she is stockpiling painkillers and becoming increasingly obsessed with an unrealistic crush on a local musician. Eleanor's life begins to change when Raymond, a goofy guy from the IT department, takes her for a potential friend, not a freak of nature. As if he were luring a feral animal from its hiding place with a bit of cheese, he gradually brings Eleanor out of her shell. Then it turns out that shell was serving a purpose. This debut novel by Gail Honeyman is part comic, part emotional thriller, and part love story. It illustrates how childhood trauma can, and often does, have long-term affects.

**Many independent opportunities** for continuing education can be found on our webpage, [jccasa.net](http://jccasa.net). Go to **VOLUNTEERS** and then the drop-down menu to **CONTINUING EDUCATION**. These links provide an easy way to gain your **required** in-service hours. The in-service completion form is available to complete and email or hand deliver to your CASA supervisor. Check out the variety of materials and topics. The National CASA Podcasts offer a wide-range of items such as: permanency, outcomes for older youth, meeting emotional needs, poverty, bullying, autism, and parental incarceration, just to name a few. Most are short (under 30 minutes) and provide wonderful opportunities to maintain your status as an active volunteer.

## September Birthdays

September 1— **Sherry Hodges-Thornton**

September 4 — **Shana Lane**

September 17 — **Marie Souza**

September 29— **Megan Rogers**



See the **2022 Fall Volunteer Training Schedule** (which follows on page 5) and make sure to tell any of your friends who might be interested about the next pre-service training opportunity to become a CASA volunteer to help change a child's story in Southeast Mississippi. This will be the last formal training scheduled for 2022!





## **CASA OF SOUTHEAST MISSISSIPPI, INC. 2022 FALL VOLUNTEER TRAINING**

**Overview: Part 1 and interview**

**October 4      6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.**

**Overview: Part 2**

**October 6      6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.**

**The Bleux Case**

**October 11      6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.**

**The Green Case**

**October 18      6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.**

**The Amarillo Case**

**October 25      6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.**

**The Redd Case**

**November 1      6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.**

**Wrap-up — November 8**

**Optima Training, Induction, Court Observations  
TBD \***



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**September 24**

# **CASA of SOUTHEAST MISSISSIPPI**

**Formerly Jackson County CASA  
Fundraising Event**

## **5D BARREL RUN**

**Cash in      Cash out**

**\$500+ Added**

**Conrad Mallett Vancleave Arena**

**Free Admission**

**Concession stand available and a wonderful silent auction**

**Exhibitions from 10:00 - 1:00**

**First draw closes at 2:00**

**Kiddies start at 2:00**

**Books close last 10 riders**

**Open starts at 2:30**

**Kiddies: \$10 + prizes**

**3D Senior EF: \$25**

**5D Open EF: \$40**

**Open Poles EF: \$25**

**5D Youth EF: \$25**

**Processing Fee: \$10**

*Proud agency of United Way for Jackson and George Counties*

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



# INTRO TO TBRI

## Trust-Based Relational Intervention

Presented by: Angela Lynn  
TBRI Practitioner Trainer

September 13, 2022

9:00-11:00am

September 19, 2022

1:30-3:30pm

September 22, 2022

5:00-7:00pm

Location: CASA Office

MUST RSVP by Sept. 9, 2022

228-762-7370

angela\_lynn@co.jackson.ms.us

