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Inside this issue:

FYI	2
Outstanding Volunteer	3
Holiday Promotions	3
Continuing Education	4
November Birthdays	4
Program Statistics	4



CHANGE A CHILD'S STORY.™

CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN
SOUTHEAST MISSISSIPPI

Festive For CASA

Thank you for stopping by to see our Display
Please consider donating to **CASA**



Helping Foster Children in Southeast Mississippi

The holiday season is always a magical time, especially for the children. That's why Jen and Chuck Miestchovich go all out with their decorations for Halloween and Christmas. People often wonder why they do it, the answer is simple — they do it for the kids! Seeing their happy, smiling faces makes all of the hard work worth it. And this year, they have decided to take it one step further. They are teaming up with **CASA of Southeast Mississippi, Inc.** to become the first house to join the **Festive for CASA** campaign. This amazing organization does so much for children in foster care throughout the year and especially during the holidays, and Jen and Chuck want to do their part to make this year even more special. So, if you enjoy their displays and feel called to donate, you can do so with the QR code on the sign they have placed in their yard. Let's spread some joy and make this holiday season unforgettable for the kids in our communities. Christmas decorations will be set up at 29 Lakeview Drive in the Lakeview Subdivision in Ocean Springs (off Hwy 90 behind the Rib Crib and Tractor Supply).

DONATE - The bulk of the **CASA** budget comes from donations from generous people like you. Please find it in your heart to give today and help us to continue providing this vital service to the children in Jackson, George and Greene Counties. You may use the QR code above to make a donation. Remember that your gift is **100% tax-deductible**. Thank you for your generous support of the **CASA** mission and program.



FYI



Pictured at left are **Frances Allsup** and **Karen Sock** at the continuing education session held on October 16 at the **Hancock Whitney Bank** in Pascagoula, **Karen's** presentation was made possible thanks to an **Ingalls Shipbuilding** (Division of HII) grant awarded for governing board training. **CASA** is so grateful for those board members who were able to be on hand for the training: **Doug Adams, Ashley Davis, Greg Cronier, Shawn Landrum, Brandon Riches, and Rene' Shaw.**



Thank you to the wonderful group at the **Blind Butcher** in Pascagoula who provided the tasty charcuterie board (pictured above) which everyone enjoyed at the continuing education lunch.

Thank you to **Hank Cochran** with the Lucedale office of **Modern Woodmen of American Insurance**. A faithful supporter of our mission, he donated these adorable blankets to give to the children and youth **CASA** serves. What great stocking stuffers these will make for some very lucky boys and girls as they settle in to enjoy the 2023 holiday season.



Pictured at left: **Zoey Lamkin, Advocate Supervisor**, and **Frances Allsup, Executive Director**, pose under the new **CASA of Southeast Mississippi** tent at the 7th Annual Gulf Coast Equality Fest held on October 21st on the Great Lawn at **Harrah's Gulf Coast** in Biloxi. The wonderful new tent and table covering made a beautiful statement for all parties who dropped by to inquire about volunteering and to learn more about the **CASA** mission. A special thank you to **Jimmy Allsup** who helped the ladies with putting up and taking down the tent and display.



Halloween decorations were out in full force as part of this **Festive for CASA** display in Ocean Springs. As folks enjoyed the spooky scene, they were able to scan the QR code posted on the sign to make a donation.

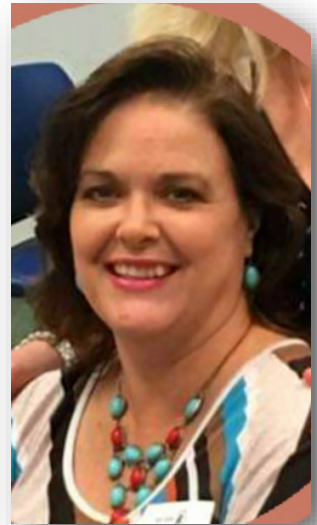


Our amazing **CASA** quilter, **Patti Tate**, dropped by with five of her latest beautiful creations. These unique handmade items are such special gifts for the children we serve. They will make the perfect gift for any little boy or girl. Shown at left, **CASA** advocate supervisors **Abby Clark, Zoey Lamkin, and Amber Ehlers** holding three of **Ms. Patti's** beautiful handmade creations while two are draped over the cabinets in the background.

November Outstanding CASA Volunteer

Florence Motes has been selected as the **CASA Outstanding Volunteer** for the month of November. **Florence** has been a **CASA** volunteer since 2018. She has been assigned cases where the children left the foster care system and were adopted into safe, permanent, loving homes. She has also handled cases where the children and their parents were successfully reunited. On most of the cases she has worked, she has remained the one constant person that the children have seen from the case's beginning to its final closing. **Florence** describes her experience of being a **CASA** volunteer as humbling, frustrating, rewarding, and amazing. Her most gratifying role is to be able to provide a voice for that child going through the court system in a time of upheaval. She has learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. She hopes in some small way the children she has worked with will never forget they are worthy and loved.

Florence is a life-long resident of Jackson County. She is married to an amazing man, and they have two grown daughters and two very special grandsons.



BARNES & NOBLE
BOOKSELLERS
www.bn.com

Barnes and Noble in Gulfport is once again partnering with **CASA of Southeast Mississippi** and hosting a holiday book drive giving the customers who shop there a chance to purchase a book for a child in foster care. Books have always been favorites for stocking stuffers. The store will then contact us when the box is filled, and we will handle the pick ups.

Thank you to **Dawn Fritz** and the amazing staff at the Crossroads Parkway location for again giving us the opportunity to provide these books at Christmas. Do not forget to drop by while you are out doing your holiday shopping.



Pav & Broome Fine Jewelry located on Hwy 49 in Downtown Gulfport

What could be better than helping the abused and neglected children of South Mississippi? Getting a chance to win a one-carat diamond every time you did might be. During our **Carats for Kids** campaign, we're offering you just that - the chance to be the difference in a child's life & future AND the chance to win a one-carat, lab-grown diamond. Beginning **October 23**, in conjunction with our **50th Anniversary Celebration**, we are accepting donations for the **Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)** organizations of South Mississippi. Each donation with a minimum value of \$20 will enter you into the weekly drawing for a one-carat, lab-grown diamond. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/3rT7IIS>

Continuing Education Opportunities

Reminder— to maintain your active 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.

TBRI IN THE COURTS - This continuing education opportunity is being offered by the **Jackson County Youth Court** on **Friday, November 3**, at **9 am - 12:30 pm** at Church on the Rock (3901 Chicot Road in Pascagoula). The facilitators will be **Cynthia Chauvin** and **Naomi Strawhorn** with Hancock County CASA. **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, Connection Principles to address attachment needs, and Connecting Principles to disarm fear-based behaviors. 3.5 CEU's may be earned.

Mental Health Essentials (Two-Part Series) Thursday—November 2 and Thursday November 16
Presented by **Mental Health Collaborative - Central Time (12 noon - 1 pm)**

Join us for this **two-part webinar series** with the Mental Health Collaborative, where they will present evidence-based training tailored for CASA staff and volunteers. Dive deep into the core tenets of Mental Health Literacy, encompassing essential topics like combating stigma, gaining insights into mental illnesses, advocating for positive mental health, and navigating the roadmap to professional support. As an added bonus, this webinar will equip you with invaluable strategies to safeguard your own mental well-being as you advocate for others. Gain insights from seasoned clinicians who'll spearhead these webinars, ensuring an insightful learning experience.

Number of in-service **credit per session: 1.0**

Part One - Mental Health Essentials: Foundations of Mental Health - Copy and paste this link to register: https://nationalcasagal.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_vDud1bEcSRWb-CG2x9PvLA

Part Two - Mental Health Essentials: Strategies to Support & Promote Mental Health - Copy and paste this link to register: https://nationalcasagal.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8dSepid8Rcmp3iKt6zoRmg

November Birthdays

November 1
Allie Capps

November 3
Cynthia Landrum

November 6
Teresa Blair

November 13
Teresa Jaye

November 14
Marenda Harper



November 18
Haley Aziz
Trudi Dixon
Joyce Nelson
Ken Rice

November 27
Gena Heffner

November 30
Alicia Alexander
Brandon Riches

Latest Program Statistics

As of September 30, 2023, 115 CASA volunteers have served 150 children with 2,014 donated hours of service for the calendar year. Thank you to each dedicated volunteer who has worked to provide a voice for a child who is journeying through the Youth Court process. As the number of children in custody continues to grow, we are in need of additional advocate volunteers to serve in 2023!