



the FOCUS on CASA

A HELLO FROM THE NEW DIRECTOR

As the new Executive Director of the Oklahoma CASA Association, I would like to introduce myself to the statewide network. I have been with CASA since 1989. I worked as a Volunteer Coordinator for Cleveland County CASA as I completed my Master's in Social Work, and in 1991, was hired as the Executive Director. At that time I was asked to make a two year commitment to the program, which at 23, sounded like a long time! Last year we at Cleveland County celebrated my 20th anniversary with CASA, a testimony to how much I have treasured my years with this organization.



Over the years I always took an active role in Oklahoma CASA because my belief was that we as an organization are stronger when we stand together rather than alone. My "active role" took on new meaning in the fall of 2008 when I stepped in as Interim Executive Director. As much as I knew about CASA in Oklahoma and the importance of a strong state association, I gained a newfound respect for the incredible diversity of programs across the state as well as for my fellow directors. It was the support of those directors that buoyed me during my service as Interim Executive Director, which corresponded to one of the most challenging times in CASA's history in Oklahoma. As the challenging times came to a close, I recognized that perhaps my experience and commitment to CASA could best be used serving CASA at the state level.

The mission of Oklahoma CASA is to present a statewide voice for abused and neglected children by enhancing the growth of CASA programs throughout Oklahoma. The local programs, their staff and advocates, are why Oklahoma CASA exists. And while I have no idea what the future holds for us, we are committed to fulfilling that mission, and hopefully in new, creative ways.

Thank you for all that you do,

Sheryl Marseilles

Sheryl Marseilles



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BUILDING BRIDGES FOR CHILDREN HIGHLIGHTS

The annual Oklahoma CASA State Conference was held April 2nd at the Biltmore Hotel and Conference Center in Oklahoma City. Over 250 CASA Volunteers, CASA Staff, and others interested in the protection of our most vulnerable citizens came from across the state to learn, to network, and to inspire one another.

The opening session set such a positive tone and started the conference off in such a dramatic way that attendees talked about it for the remainder of the conference. Derek Clark, a former foster child turned national speaker, inspired, challenged and entertained and attendees found themselves laughing one moment and wiping tears the next.

"I was very inspired by Derek's presentation," said one conference attendee. "I am a foster mom, adoptive mom and now a CASA volunteer. I could relate on so many different levels."

Throughout the day, three breakout times were offered and attendees had six different topics to choose from, offering a nice variety to our guests. Topics ranged from *Exposure to Parental Substance Abuse Before and After Birth* to *Facilitating a Sense of Safety Through Self-Regulation*, where attendees learned about healthy self-

regulation and how to apply that in their lives as well as those they serve.

"Incredibly helpful, very thought provoking," commented one attendee on the self-regulation workshop. "[It was] instrumental in becoming much more aware of myself and the need for my own self-regulation in my CASA work."

For lunch, attendees were treated to a little bit of a more humorous setting to help lighten the mood with laughter. Guest speaker and humor therapist, John Irvin, reminded everyone that humor helps us deal with change, and maintain a positive attitude even when stress is high and that it is crucial in the role we serve as CASA volunteers. John also assisted Sheryl Marseilles in presenting the 2010 Awards of Excellence winners. Five individuals across the state were recognized for their outstanding work for Oklahoma's children.

Overall, the conference was a success and offered many lessons that individuals were able to take back and apply to their CASA programs and cases. We are looking forward to offering another thought provoking and educational conference again in 2011.

KNOWING WHO YOU ARE TRAINING

The Oklahoma CASA Association is pleased to bring a National CASA Training to Oklahoma for our programs. Knowing Who You Are is a 2-day workshop, with curriculum developed by Casey Family Programs, which allows participants to explore the concepts of race and ethnicity to better support the healthy development of their constituents' racial and ethnic identity.

In the program, participants will discover:

- Ideas for helping youth in foster care achieve a positive and healthy sense of racial and ethnic identity
- Opportunities to investigate the impact of stereotypes, messages, and social influences on your own racial and ethnic identity.
- Data about the impact of institutional racism on various racial and ethnic groups.
- Strategies for addressing racism in your personal and professional life.

For now the training is only open to staff that have pre-registered but it is something we look forward to presenting again in the future.

TECH FLASH - WIRELESS NETWORKING

Today, it seems as if most homes with broadband internet have a wireless network. The inexpensive convenience and mobility they provide is hard to pass up. Configuring one properly though does not have to be a daunting task.

There are many standards of wireless, the newest being “N”. It is faster, allowing for the streaming of video. This standard is also backward compatible with the “B” & “G” standards. Many common manufacturers have an array of devices which can be easily setup following their wizard. To do this though, you will have to get into the router’s settings. Open your web browser and type in the address (a series of numbers); you’ll then be prompted for a username and password. The defaults for the most common Routers are as follow:

<u>Router</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Username</u>	<u>Password</u>
3Com	192.168.1.1	admin	admin
D-Link	192.168.0.1	admin	(blank)
Linksys	192.168.1.1	admin	admin
Netgear	192.168.0.1	admin	password

Now, knowing this information, one of the first things that should be done is to go into the administrative settings and change the password.

When setting up your network, I recommend creating a name (SSID) that is distinguishable from your neighbors. This is an area where your creative juices can flow. My son selected the “Dominator of Awesomeness” for ours. While in the area for setting up the name, there will be a section to enable and set up the encryption. It is highly recommended that this is done if you value the information on your computers. Typical standards of encryption are WEP and WPA. The wizard may generate several keys or you can create your own. I recommend coming up with a phrase and taking the first letter from each word to make the key. Also mix in numbers and non-standard characters (!@#%*?) with a blend of upper and lower case letters. I’ll use the numeral “8” for the word “ate” and make the phrase a question by ending in a “?”. This makes it very difficult to hack.

Once that’s done, it’s time to ensure the antennas on the router are in the optimal location. Position it in a central location away from metal objects and off the floor. The antennas supplied with routers are omni-directional. So if your router is by an outside wall, half the signal is going into the wall. The solution is to replace the antenna with a Hi-gain antenna. This focuses the signal in one direction.

If your home is like most, you have a cordless phone. These usually are 2.4 GHz which the router also broadcasts on. So if you find that when the phone rings the wireless signal drops, this is the culprit. There are a couple of solutions though. In the wireless router settings, there is a drop down menu called “Wireless Channel”. Change the channel and see if that improves performance. Otherwise, look for a phone that runs on 5.8 GHz or 900 MHz.

By following these simple steps, your wireless network will be more secure and perform strongly.

Happy surfing,

Paul Scott



**NEW WEBSITE
UNDER
CONSTRUCTION!**

We are working on building a new website which will debut soon. We are excited to be offering a more user friendly site for our programs and volunteers. We will keep you posted!

PAYNE COUNTY CASA'S DANCING FOR THE STARS IS A SUCCESS



Though Payne County's Dancing for the Stars 2009 event raised the most money ever for the program, netting \$61,500, their second round of Dancing for the Stars in 2010 was not too shabby and still set records. Dancing for the Stars in 2010 raised \$53,000 for the program and was the largest event ever put on with a record 20 sponsor tables and almost 350 in attendance despite the tough economic climate.

The event patterns the show *Dancing with the Stars* where local celebrities are paired with an instructor and enter a dancing competition. This year's winners were Ellen Morgan and John Howell, Past President of the Payne County CASA board. With only five weeks to practice, and dealing with a case of H1N1, John was able to pull through and win the contest with the help of his instructor Ellen. Congrats!

FAREWELL TO LONGTIME CASA SUPPORTERS

In 2000, Karen Campbell applied to be a CASA in Payne County and was appointed to her first case the next year. When she could no longer work cases in 2003, she and her husband, Mike, decided to stay involved in another way – through photography. The couple started their own photography business, MK's Photography, in Stillwater. Immediately they wanted to know how they could help CASA and have been helping ever since. Now Mike and Karen Campbell are moving to Colorado where they will continue to help their local CASA program but they will be greatly missed in Oklahoma.

While in Oklahoma, they became the official photographers of Payne County CASA's annual fundraising gala. They not only took 'party pics' but also took portraits of the couples at the gala and then gave the money they made from the portraits to benefit CASA! They did all of this and also donated photo packages as auction items.

At every CASA event, from fundraisers to Christmas parties to appreciation parties and everything in between, they were there.

The couple co sponsored the *You Oughta Be in Pictures* booth with us at the Payne County Adoption Party from 2007-2009. Kids dressed up and got their photos made with special attention given to sibling groups. Over 400 pictures were printed and given to abused and neglected children.

In 2007, they started the Kids for Kids Art Photography project. A former CASA child was allowed to use the couple's professional equipment and was taught photogra-



Mike and Karen Campbell received the 2007 Lela Roddy Special Recognition Award from the Oklahoma CASA Association for all the work they have done for Oklahoma's children.

phy. The child chose his/her favorite prints and learned editing software. The chosen prints were then printed, signed and sold with the proceeds benefiting CASA. Via donations each child that completed the program received a professional grade camera to continue their hobby. Three kids went through this program and all of these kids added photography to their hobbies or something they might like to do for a living.

The Campbell's will leave behind a legacy with the Payne County CASA program and will be greatly missed.

THE FOCUS NEEDS YOUR INPUT

Submit your CASA success stories or upcoming events today to see them printed in *The Focus on CASA*. E-mail Jennifer Hunter at jennifer@oklahomacasa.org or call 1-800-742-2272.

Don't forget our Focus on Volunteers! Send us the story of that one volunteer who goes above and beyond the call of duty. We will pick a volunteer to be featured in the bi-annual newsletters.



*Top Left: CASA Cottage for Tulsa
CASA Top Right: Creek County
Playhouse Left: Playhouse Parade
Houses and Car for Oklahoma
County*

THE SUMMER OF CASA PLAYHOUSES

There are a number of ways our local CASA programs raise money, whether through fundraisers, grants or sponsorships. One popular way is to build a playhouse to raffle off or use at an auction. Every playhouse from our programs is unique and promises hours of entertainment for some lucky children. This summer, there are many opportunities for you to enter for a chance to win.

“Operation Playhouse” benefits Tulsa County CASA and will help raise funds to help recruit and train more CASA volunteers. A custom made playhouse, “CASA Cottage by Rausch Coleman Homes”, is on display at Woodland Hills Mall, from July 10 - August 8, 2010. For each \$5 dollar donation to Tulsa CASA, the donor’s name will be entered into a drawing to win the “CASA Cottage.” The drawing for the opportunity house will take place on August 8, 2010.

“Playhouse Parade” benefits CASA of Oklahoma County and this is the first year

for the program to raffle the houses. Five artfully crafted playhouses will be displayed from July 26 - August 8, 2010, at Penn Square Mall, Macy's Wing. Raffle tickets for the playhouses will available for \$5 each or 5 for \$20. In addition, an electric car will be raffled with tickets available for \$10 each or 3 for \$25.

“Project Playhouse 2010” benefits Creek County CASA in Sapulpa. Their barn themed playhouse is fully carpeted and has safety glass windows that open and close. There is also a full-size adult door on the back of the playhouse (when children outgrow it, it can be converted to storage). Tickets are \$5 each, 5 for \$20 or 15 for \$50. The drawing for this playhouse will be on December 18, 2010 - just in time for the holidays!

For contact information and to learn more about these playhouses, please see the side bar to the right.

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THESE UPCOMING PROGRAM EVENTS!

3rd District CASA Bike Event

- The 3rd Annual Quartz Mountain Diamond Back 100 will be held on August 7, 2010 in Altus. For more information, call 580-482-4600.

Operation Playhouse for Tulsa CASA

- The drawing will be held on August 8, 2010 at the Woodland Hills Mall. For more information, call 918-584-2272.

Playhouse Parade for CASA of Oklahoma County

- The drawing will be held on August 8, 2010 in the Macy’s Wing of Penn Square Mall. For more information, call 405-713-6456.

San Bois CASA Golf Tournament

- 4th Annual Golf Tournament to be held on Friday, October 1st at the Wolfe Ridge Golf Club in Poteau. Tee off at 1:30 pm. For more information, call 918-647-3267.

Creek County CASA Playhouse Project 2010

- The drawing will be held on December 18, 2010. For more information, call 918-224-6492.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Oklahoma CASA Association is to present a statewide voice for abused and neglected children by enhancing the growth of CASA programs throughout Oklahoma.

CASA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 9/6 | State Office Closed (Labor Day) |
| 9/21 | Oklahoma CASA Association Board Retreat / Board Meeting (Oklahoma History Center) |
| 9/30 - 10/1 | “Knowing Who You Are” Training (Special Registration thru State CASA office) |
| 11/9 | OCASAA Board Meeting (State CASA Office) |

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