



# CASA CONNECTION

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**Jackson County CASA, Inc.**  
4903 Telephone Road  
Pascagoula, MS 39567

Phone: 228-762-7370  
Fax: 228-762-7385

frances\_allsup@co.jackson.ms.us  
brenda\_lancaster@co.jackson.ms.us  
amy\_guidry@co.jackson.ms.us  
adrian\_mccullum@co.jackson.ms.us

[www.jccasa.net](http://www.jccasa.net)



Frances L. Allsup  
Executive Director

Brenda M. Lancaster  
Permanency  
Coordinator

Amy L. Guidry  
Volunteer  
Coordinator

Adrian D. McCullum  
Program Assistant

Board of Directors:  
Marilyn Montgomery  
Ken Rice  
Troy Ross  
Misty Russell  
Lucy Selman  
Shannon Vincent  
Karen Whitford

## House Bill 1213 will support CASA



Roy Kitchell, Executive Director for CASA of Harrison County, Frances Allsup, Executive Director for Jackson County CASA, Inc., Debra Foster, CASA of Harrison County, Cynthia Chauvin, Executive Director for CASA of Hancock County, Brenda Lancaster and Adrian McCullum, Jackson County CASA

Representatives from CASA of Hancock County and CASA of Harrison County joined Frances, Adrian and Brenda on January 12 for *CASA Mississippi Capitol Day* in Jackson. We arrived in time to attend the *Gulf Coast Legislative Reception*, hosted the previous evening at the *Trade Mart* in Jackson. CASA Mississippi State Director, Mary Purvis joined us at the reception which presented an opportunity to meet face-to-face with our legislators, key public officials and opinion leaders to further our mission.

The group and Ms. Purvis arrived early on January 12 at the State Capitol, where we spent the morning meeting with State Legislators and their staff, helping to bring awareness of the CASA mission throughout our state. More importantly, it was the perfect opportunity to discuss with them the proposed legislation that would provide the needed explanation of our work on behalf of child victims of abuse and neglect and would legitimize our work. Our morning at the Capitol concluded as all the CASA representatives were introduced in Congress, an exciting and humbling experience!

We are thrilled that our efforts have helped. House bill 1213 has been filled and is in committee. Our efforts continue as we reach out to the committee members for their support.

Our time in Jackson also presented other opportunities for our programs to network and plan. Following our morning at the Capitol, we met with Heather Wagner who discussed VOCA funding opportunities for the state and local programs. January 13, the entire group met with the CASA



Mississippi Board of Directors for a *Strategic Planning Retreat*, facilitated by Nancy Burris Perett, at the MS College School of Law. Our thanks to Ms. Purvis for organizing and hosting these exceptional events. Photo: CASA Mississippi Board of Directors and Coastal CASA representatives

### Inside this

Court Dates	2
County Conferences	2
In-Service	2
CASA Blues	3
Rotary Walk to Benefit Coastal CASA Programs	3
FYI	3

## February Birthdays

**February 8**  
Robert Stanfield

**February 16**  
Katie Allsup  
Darlene Brown

**February 21**  
Kim Dossett

**February 10**  
Sherita Knowles

**February 19**  
Pat Zdenek

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



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 their voice in Court**. **Please review the schedule carefully**. **If you have any questions contact Amy or any staff for assistance**.

Confidential

Information unavailable

## County Conference's

County Conference's 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



## 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.

*Rock Lab* for MDCPS workers and selected community partners has been scheduled for February 7, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The training will be held at the *Clyde Muse Center* on the campus of Hinds Community College in Pearl, MS. The intended goal is to empower MDCPS workers and individuals who assist MDCPS workers in day to day practice in creating Rock Solid Futures for youth in foster care. Please notify the CASA office if you are interested in attending this event.

The CASA staff will host a *Roundtable Discussion* on February 23, 5:30 p.m.—7:00 p.m. at the CASA office. This discussion group will provide an opportunity for volunteers and staff to get together and share concerns and ideas. It is also a perfect opportunity to seek assistance with your assigned cases. Enjoy a hotdog, popcorn and drink while we address our concerns. R.S.V.P. by February 21.

## 2017 CASA Blues



Our CASA Blues is set for March 3, 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. It was a lot of fun last year and we are expecting it to be even better this year. The *N2 Blues Band* is back and we are all ready to party at the Grand Magnolia Ballroom. The tickets are \$40 per person, which includes food, drinks and great music. There will even be a silent auction.

Please share this information with your friends, family and coworkers. They can contact any of our Board Members (see our website [www.jccasa.net](http://www.jccasa.net)) or any CASA staff for tickets. Our office is located at Jackson County Youth Court, 228-762-7370 (CASA staff: Frances, Adrian, Amy or Brenda).

We hope to see you there!

## Rotary Walk to Benefit Coastal CASA Programs

The Rotary Club of Gulfport is sponsoring a walk to benefit the CASA programs of Hancock, Harrison and Jackson Counties on March 17.

There will be two starting points for participants, the foot of the bridge in Biloxi (in front of the Golden Nugget) and at the foot of the Pass Christian Bridge (on the Pass Christian side). Participants will walk approximately 13 miles to Jones Park in Gulfport.

The walk will begin at 6:00 a.m. with check-in at 5:30 a.m. Refreshments, snacks and food will be available after the walk to all participants.

If you would like to participate or be a sponsor of this event, contact Thania Averett, 228-314-1479 or [taverett@smpdd.com](mailto:taverett@smpdd.com)



**FRIDAY  
MARCH 17, 2017**

Check-In will be at 5:30 am and there will be a 6am start at each respective side. Both sides will finish at Jones Park with a picnic to follow.

For more information contact: **Thania Averett: 228-314-1479 or [taverett@smpdd.com](mailto:taverett@smpdd.com)**

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

Minimum \$100 Entry Fee Per Rotarian

#### PICNIC & DOOR PRIZES

Refreshments, snacks and food will be available after the walk for participants.

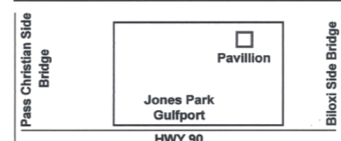
#### AWARDS

T-SHIRTS TO PRE-REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS WITH DEADLINE OF FEBRUARY 17, 2017 FOR PRE-REGISTRATION. T-Shirts available to on-site registrants while supplies last.

#### COURSE

The race will begin on the Biloxi side of the bridge or the Pass Christian side of the bridge and will end at the Pavillion by Coast Guard Station at Jones Park.

#### MAP



## FYI

Volunteer Training will be held this month; *schedule is not secured at this time*. We are currently accepting applications. If you or someone you know are interested in participating, please contact the CASA office for an application or visit our website [www.jccasa.net](http://www.jccasa.net). The schedule will be available within a few days. Look for it on our website or Facebook page.

United Way for Jackson & George Counties and Jackson County Literacy Council are partnering to sponsor a literacy week for children, March 6–10. The theme is "Reading...Oh, the Places You'll Go." Their mission is to recruit volunteers to visit our Head Start Centers in Jackson County and read to the children during literacy week. They also plan to collect new and "gently read" children's books for ages birth to 18. The books collected will be donated to the Excel by 5 communities in Moss Point, Ocean Springs and Pascagoula, Boys & Girls Clubs of Jackson County, Jackson County CASA and Mississippi Gulf Coast YMCA. Contact any CASA staff if you are interested in participating in this event.

2017 National CASA/GAL Annual Conference will be held in Seattle, WA March 11–14. Seattle is the birthplace of the CASA movement 40 years ago. This year's theme is *Building Brighter Futures for America's Abused and Neglected Children*. Visit [casaforchildren.org](http://casaforchildren.org) for more information.