



CASA CONNECTION

Volume 3: Issue 6

June 2016

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



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
Lucy Selman
Shannon Vincent
Susan Wentzell
Karen Whitford

Inside this issue:

Court Dates	2
County Conferences	2
In-Service	2
Applebee's Flapjack Breakfast Fundraiser	3
FYI	3
Congratulations Seniors	4

Abuse Hotline
1-800-222-8000

A Message from Frances

Our National CASA Association Conference will be held June 4 – 7 in National Harbor, Maryland. The entire CASA staff and Volunteer Paula Perry will attend this very exciting event. During our absence the office will be manned by Volunteer Conal Lancaster, June 6 - 8. If you need assistance with anything during this time, you can contact the office and speak to him. We will be back in the office on June 9.

The National Conference is a wonderful opportunity for the staff to network and gain knowledge on a wide variety of topics, including marketing, educational advocacy, funding opportunities, volunteer recruitment and retention, as well as many other topics of interest. There will be more than 65 workshops for the staff to choose from. I know we will return energized and excited, ready to share what we learned with each of you.

Also, this is a special year for National Conference. CASA programs from all states will be on Capitol Hill presenting our mission to the Representatives and Senators from their respective states. This wonderful opportunity will help pave the way toward a working relationship between National CASA and Congress. I and Jackson County CASA have been asked by National CASA to lead our Mississippi CASA representatives in this quest by scheduling appointments with our Congressmen, making preparations for the meetings and serving as the on-site lead for state delegation during *CASA Meets Congress*. Needless to say, I and the staff are very excited!

VAC



The Volunteer Advisory Council, VAC, met on May 13 to discuss ways that the team and staff could better serve the needs of our Volunteers. Plans are in the works to provide an In-Service on Cultural Diversity. The staff and the VAC welcome your suggestions.

Back row: Volunteer Coordinator Amy Guidry, Middie Blake, Program Assistant Adrian McCullum, Shana Lane. Front row: Paula Perry, Patty Waters, Karen Bradley. Not pictured: VAC Chairman Debbie Braudis, Virginia Brink, Julia Noble and Joan Pylate.

June Birthdays

June 1
Nancy Howell
Beth Keenan

June 2
LeAnne Coleman

June 6
Kristin Stephens

June 7
Denise Lee

June 8
Barbara Saavedra

June 18
Sam Owens

June 24
Karen Blakeney

June 25
Nancy Snodgrass

June 28
Beverly Goff

June 29
Tiffany Kirkland



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.**

Unfortunately, the Foster Care Review schedule was not available for this month. However, the social worker assigned to the case will notify the CASA office and/or the CASA Advocate with a letter of invitation to the conference. When we receive the schedule we will send out a special notification to those of you with scheduled conferences.

If you receive an invitation from DHS, please notify the CASA staff and let us know if you will or will not be able to attend.

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.

Hopefully, the weather will be better this month and we can actually have a Pop-Up Picnic In-Service this month. Remember, one day, out of the blue, we will send out an invitation for our volunteers to join us for a Dutch-treat lunch in one of the parks in Jackson County, 11:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m. We will try to give you a day or two notice so that you can make arrangements to join us. This too, will be an opportunity to share thoughts and ideas while we discuss any problems and concerns. It too, will be an opportunity to just laugh and visit with our CASA family.

The Applebee's Flapjack Fundraiser is an excellent opportunity for you to earn In-Service hours. Your assistance is needed to help sell tickets and work the event. Contact any staff if you are interested in being a part of this fundraising opportunity. See page 3 for further details.

Contact the CASA office to participate in these events.

Applebee's Flapjack Breakfast Fundraiser



SHORT STACKS FOR A TALL CAUSE!

As you know, Jackson County CASA, Inc. is a proud agency of United Way for Jackson and George Counties. It is that time of year again, when we begin our Pacesetters campaign to show our appreciation and support for all that they do for us. To raise funds this year we will join Applebee's for a flapjack breakfast fundraiser on June 25. We are very excited about this event and hope that you are too.

Applebee's in Ocean Springs will be our host for the breakfast. **Tickets are \$7.00 each and are on sale now.** Breakfast will be served between 8:00 a.m.—10:00 a.m. All proceeds will go to benefit United Way for Jackson and George Counties. Volunteers will receive additional information regarding the details within a few days.

For more information contact Jackson County CASA, Inc. at 228.762.7370 or email Adrian at adrian_mccullum@co.jackson.ms.us Thank you for your support!

FYI

Volunteer Middie Blake will represent Jackson County CASA as members of the MAP (Making A Plan) Team. This team consist of representatives of various agencies that meet each month. They review some of their more challenging cases and work together to help create a plan of assistance for the clients. Middie is also serving as the liaison for the MAD/PIF group. Each month she will be contacting the volunteers of CASA children with birthdays in the upcoming month in an effort to determine the locations of the children. This information is needed so that the MAD/PIF group can send a birthday greeting and gift card to the children. Don't let your CASA children be left out! Your cooperation is needed and will be greatly appreciated.

May 2 Brenda Lancaster and Adrian McCullum spoke to the Jackson County Republican Women's Club (JCRW) at their monthly meeting which was held at the Grand Magnolia Ballroom in Pascagoula. We are proud to partner with the JCRW in their Caring for America Project "*Fostering Jackson County Children*". These wonderful ladies will provide duffle bags filled with items that will assist our foster/CASA children who are placed in an emergency care situation. As their partner, we will make sure they are given to these children in need. Thank you JCRW for choosing us as your partner in this worthwhile project.

Thank you to all of our supporters who shop on Amazon for choosing Jackson County CASA as their charity of choice. As a result of their generosity, this month we were honored to receive a donation from the AmazonSmile Foundation. If you shop on Amazon, you too can choose JC CASA as your charity to support. For more details bookmark this link <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/80-0231274> and support us every time you shop. With each purchase you make Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to us. Spread the word!

Friday morning, May 20, was our first Art Therapy In-Service. The session was held in the CASA office and conducted by Volunteer Karen Blakeney. Participants were guided through a *Crazy Quilt* project that was designed to help them relax and bring out their creative side. This simple project is also something that the volunteers can use as a way to get to know their CASA children; an easy icebreaker that uses some very basic materials. To accommodate all of our volunteers, a night session is being offered. It will be held at 5:30 on the evening May 31.

Our thanks to our friends in Janet's Quilting Bee for their continued support of our CASA program. Once again they have made some beautiful handmade quilts for us to give to our deserving children. Included in this batch were quilts made by the Home Economics students of Bonifay Middle School in Bonifay, FL who took on a project called "Quilts for Kids". These special quilts come with a personal message from and photo of the student that created each quilt. Janet's Quilting Bee received these quilts and distributed them to local CASA programs. Thank you ladies for these beautiful treasures!

Miss Tri-County's Teen Mississippi Megan Allen provides a little "summer fun" items for our CASA children. Sand toys, batons, bubbles, coloring books, etc. were among the many items collected by Megan. She also presented us with a \$500 cash donation. Thank you Megan for your generosity and support.

Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative Community Partnership Board met May 31 in Pascagoula for a resource sharing session. Ingrid Cloy, Site Leader for Jim Casey and Barry Dixon, Division Director for Southern Christian Services opened the meeting by explaining the purpose of the Partnership Board. Representatives from Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Jackson County Civic Action Committee and United Way for Jackson and George Counties were on hand to provided information regarding the services provided by their agencies. Mario Johnson, Division Director of Independent Living for MS Department of Child Protection Services ended the meeting with a discussion of the services available through the Independent Living program. Mario also stressed the importance of creating a network of resources throughout the state that will be available to all youths and families in need.

Congratulations to More of Our Graduates



Lauren Olivia Cuthbert

Lauren Olivia Cuthbert is the granddaughter of Volunteer Deborah Braudis. Lauren is a proud graduate of Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado.

Bennie Hickman, III is the son of Volunteer Carolyn Hickman and grandson of Volunteer Deborah Braudis and the late Jack Braudis. Bennie is a graduate of Vancleave High School and plans to attend Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in the fall.



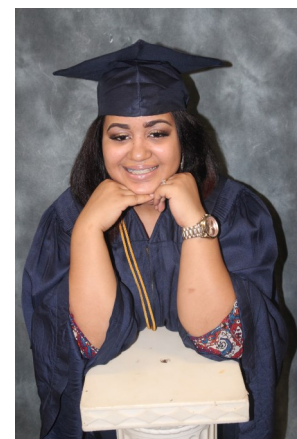
Bennie Hickman

Morgan Ann Minyard is the daughter of Charles and Ann Minyard of Alpharetta, GA and the niece of Volunteer Conal and Brenda Lancaster, our Permanency Coordinator. Morgan graduated Magna Cumlaude from the University of Georgia with a Bachelor of Music degree in music therapy. She was the recipient of the School of Music Directors Excellence Award and the Sigma Alpha Iota Scholastic Award for maintaining the highest GPA for the last two semesters. Morgan is also a member of the Phi Beta Kappa and Pi Kappa Lambda honor societies for music. She will begin her internship as a music therapist at Trident Medical Center in North Charleston, South Carolina this September.



Morgan Minyard

Elizabeth Montgomery is a graduate of Pascagoula High School. She is the daughter of Marilyn Montgomery, CASA Board President and Youth Court Intake Officer. Elizabeth plans to attend Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College at Perk and complete her secondary education at University of Southern Mississippi. She plans to major in Business Administration and Early Childhood Development. Her dream is to own and operate her own childcare center. Elizabeth also plans to obtain her Cosmetology License as a makeup artist.



Elizabeth Montgomery

*Congratulations to all of our
2016 graduates!*

Special Recognition

We would also like to express our congratulations to our Fulbright U.S. Scholarship recipient Katherine "Kati" Perry. Kati is the daughter of Volunteer Paula and Carl Perry. She is a recent graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish. She has been selected to the prestigious Fulbright U.S. Student Program, the largest U.S. exchange program offering opportunities for students and young professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching, and primary and secondary school teaching worldwide. Kati will be an English Teaching Assistantship in Spain for the 2016-17 year. She will work in high school classrooms in Madrid, Spain, helping to build lesson plans for classes taught in English and preparing students for the Model United Nations Conference in spring, 2017.



Kati Perry