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# VOICES FOR CHILDREN CASA OF CENTRAL VIRGINIA



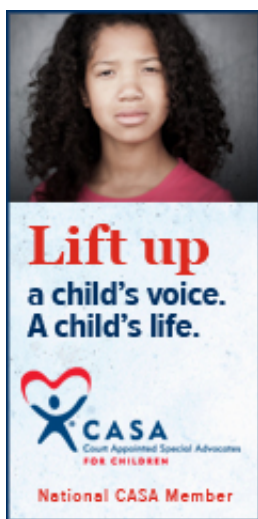
Issue No. 12

December 2011

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**Click this link  
to watch**

## ***Message from the Executive Director*** **BE THANKFUL**

As we head into the holiday season, we hope you will find time to relax and enjoy good times with family and friends. We also hope that you will end the year 2011 with a sense of satisfaction for a " job well done". Your role as a CASA volunteer is crucial to achieving positive outcomes for our children. We thank YOU for all of your efforts on behalf of children and their families. We realize your job is often difficult and the happy ending nowhere in sight. We send you our best wishes for a happy and successful year in 2012 - both in your personal life and in your life as a CASA volunteer. Although we focus on gratitude at Thanksgiving, the following poem seems appropriate for all times, but especially as we end a year and begin a new one. I thought I would share it with you.

Be thankful that you don't already have everything you desire.  
If you did, what would there be to look forward to?

Be thankful when you don't know something,  
For it gives you the opportunity to learn.

Be thankful for the difficult times.  
During those times you grow.

Be thankful for your limitations,  
Because they give you strength and character.

Be thankful for your mistakes.  
They will teach you valuable lessons.

Be thankful when you're tired and weary,  
Because it means you've made a difference.

## "I Am for the Child" Campaign Video



Donate securely through Click and Pledge

It's easy to be thankful for the good things.  
A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who are also thankful for the setbacks.

Gratitude can turn a negative into a positive.  
Find a way to be thankful for your troubles,  
And they can become your blessings.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

*Jane Francis*

**October Activity**  
70 Volunteers Assigned  
12 Volunteers Inducted  
189 Children Served by Program  
25 New Children  
23 Closed Children

Read the Starfish Story and View Additional Starfish  
Buy a Beautiful Starfish Necklace from CASA of Central VA for \$20



Order Starfish Necklaces and Ornaments On-Line

Buy a Beautiful Starfish Ornament for \$10



### ***In Memory of Judge William Light***

The CASA of Central Virginia program is saddened by the passing of the Honorable William Light, presiding Lynchburg J&DR Judge. A beautiful memorial service was held on November 1st at St. Paul's Episcopal Church with family, friends and colleges gathering to celebrate his life.

Judge Light served as a Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court judge since 2003 and began practicing law in Lynchburg in 1984. Judge Light was a true advocate for the best interest of children and will be deeply missed.



### ***Volunteer Spotlight*** **Sonia Smith**

**Advocate Manager:** Lorna Rexrode  
**Court served:** Lynchburg  
**Occupation:** R.N.  
**Length of time as a CASA volunteer:** 1 years

**Most Memorable CASA Moment:** At the conclusion of the custody hearing of my first case, the grandmother of the child involved asked if she was allowed



to give me a hug.

### One example of how your advocacy made a difference on a case:

It is difficult to identify a specific example as to how I made a difference in a case. I believe that everything I do for a CASA child makes a difference.

### What means the most to you about being a CASA volunteer?

Our children are our most precious gift and yet they are society's most vulnerable. As a CASA volunteer I am able to give voice to the voiceless, power to the powerless and hope to the hopeless.



West Lynchburg Baptist Church volunteers have filled 1,156 shoe boxes with special items for children around the world which will be distributed through the Operation Christmas Child program of Samaritan's Purse. Many of the shoeboxes used are ones that volunteers obtained at last year's shoe sale. This is just one of the many positive outcomes of the Heart and Sole Shoe Market!

#### Helpful Links

[CASA of Central Virginia](#)

[National CASA Association](#)

[Virginia's Judicial System](#)

[Virginia Department of Social Services](#)

[Voices for Virginia's Children](#)



**CASA**

Court Appointed Special Advocates  
FOR CHILDREN

**CASA of Central Virginia**  
P.O. Box 11373  
Lynchburg, VA 24506  
434-528-2552 phone

## **Advocate Manager Guidance and Support Corner**

### Volunteer Responsibilities/Commitment Top Ten List

The following is a list of the typical duties of a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteer. The list can be used as a reference for current volunteers or provide insight into the role for those interested in becoming a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteer.

1. Conduct an independent investigation by reviewing all pertinent documents and records and interviewing the child, parents, social workers, foster parents, teachers, therapists, daycare providers and other relevant persons to determine the facts and circumstances of the child's situation. To do this effectively, volunteers spend considerable time getting to know children and gaining their trust. That process would consist of visiting the children in their placement, no less than once per month.
2. Determine the thoughts and feelings of the child about the situation, taking into account the child's age, maturity, culture and ethnicity and degree of attachment to family members, including siblings. Also to be considered are continuity, consistency and a sense of belonging and identity.
3. Seek cooperative solutions by acting as a facilitator among conflicting parties to achieve resolution of problems and to foster positive steps toward achieving permanence for the child. Consistently identify and advocate for the child's best interest.
4. Provide written reports at every hearing which include findings and recommendations. The report documents the extent of the volunteer's investigation, lists each source of information and includes sufficient facts to justify the recommendations.
5. Appear at all hearings to advocate for the child's best interests and provide testimony when necessary.
6. Explain the court proceedings and the role of the CASA volunteer to the child in terms the child can understand.
7. Make recommendations for specific, appropriate services for the child and the child's family and advocate for necessary services which may not be immediately available.
8. Monitor implementation of case plans and court orders, checking to see that court-ordered services are implemented in a timely manner and that review hearings are held in accordance with the law.
9. Inform the court promptly of important developments in the case through appropriate means as determined by court rules or statute.

434-528-2551, fax  
[www.cvcasa.org](http://www.cvcasa.org)

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**Jane Francis**,  
 Associate Director  
**Lorna Rexrode**,  
 Advocate Managers  
**Jennifer Martin**  
**Angela Mayfield**  
**Connie Shannon**  
 Recruiting Coordinator  
**Anne Wojcikowski**  
 Bookkeeper  
**Julie Chipman**

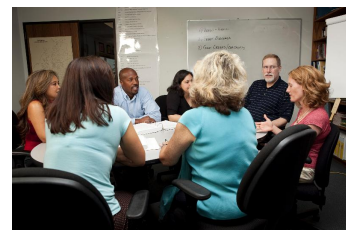
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- 10. Advocate for the child's interests in the community by bringing concerns regarding the child's health, education and mental health, etc. to the appropriate professionals to ensure that the child's needs in these areas are met.

**CASA Volunteer Training**  
**CASA Volunteer Pre-Service Training**

Applications are being accepted for our Spring Volunteer training. Classes are scheduled to begin March 1, 2012 and run through May 10, 2012. They will be held on Thursday evenings from 5:30-8:30 in the Chapel at Presbyterian Homes and Family Services in Lynchburg.



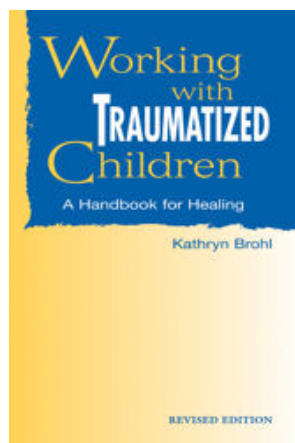
If you know anyone that may be interested, please spread the word and direct them our way.

*Training funded by The Greater Lynchburg Community Trust*

[CASA Volunteer Training Flyer](#)  
[CASA Volunteer Application](#)



**The CASA Library**  
**This Month's Featured Resource**



*Working with Traumatized Children - A Handbook for Healing* by Kathryn Brohl

This first-of-its-kind handbook discusses the mind-body connection between a terrifying experience and a child's adaptive coping mechanisms. *Working With Traumatized Children* gives you the practical knowledge to better help and guide a child suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). It details the trauma recovery process and offers specific treatment intervention techniques. Readers will especially appreciate its in-depth discussion of PTSD in abused and neglected children. Simply written and practical in orientation, it offers an effective, step-by-step process for healing and is a good reference for professionals and volunteers who want to understand and compassionately work with traumatized children and youth.

*Library Resources funded by*



**United Way  
of Central Virginia  
Partner Agency**



## National Adoption Day Celebration



Pictured at the podium of the Lynchburg J&DR Court Amy Witt and Kelsey Hammitt, social workers, surrounded by adoptive families, children and guests.

On Saturday, November 19, 2012 National Adoption Day was celebrated with nearly forty-eight hundred children recognized across the United States as finding their forever families. Two of our local Courts, Lynchburg and Campbell County, were included in those holding recognition ceremonies to finalize and acknowledge adoptions of children in foster care from the past year and celebrate adoptive families.

The Lynchburg ceremony was held in the foyer of the Lynchburg J&DR Court and celebrated the adoption of thirty-seven children with six of those being finalized on that day. Judge J. Leyburn Mosby signed and presented the adoption orders to the families. Two Lynchburg foster parents shared their emotional journey of adopting a child from foster care. The audience also heard an adopted teen's heart felt appreciation for his new family and those who assisted him along the way.

The Campbell County ceremony was held in Campbell County Circuit Court, with The Honorable John Cook, Circuit Court judge presiding. The Honorable A. Ellen White assisted in the acknowledgement of the adoption of five children from Campbell County.

## Upcoming Events

**CASA Volunteer Holiday Luncheon** - Come celebrate the holiday season with fellow CASA volunteers and staff for fun and fellowship at our annual luncheon on Wednesday, December 7th from 1-2:30pm at Bentley Commons. RSVP to Anne at 434-528-2552 or [anne@cvcasa.org](mailto:anne@cvcasa.org)

**CASA In-Service Training - Understanding the Role of Bedford Youth and Family Services:** FAPT (Family Assessment and Planning Team, CSA(Comprehensive Services Act), the role of the Therapist and Truancy. Presented by Ms. Krystal Hullette, CSA Coordinator/Youth & Family Services Manager. January 24th, 2012 from 11:00am-1:00pm at the Bedford County Administration Building, Ground Floor Conference Room, 122 E. Main St., Bedford, VA. RSVP to [angela@cvcasa.org](mailto:angela@cvcasa.org) or 540-586-4932 ext 3202

**SAVE THE DATE**

**The 13th Annual Heart and Sole Shoe Market** will be held on Saturday, April 14, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and on Sunday, April 15, from 1:00 to 4:00 in the Lynchburg Armory. We will again have the Preview Party on Friday, April 13, from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. and the ticket price is \$25.00. The Preview Party allows ticket holders to get to shop early for the best selection of shoes, win great door prizes and enjoy light refreshments. Vendors and crafters are welcome to come and sell their wares at the Heart and Sole Boutique. Please spread the word about this amazing event that not only helps women equip their closets, but also helps to increase awareness of child abuse and neglect.

Funding for this newsletter is provided by a grant  
from  
Retail Merchants Foundation, Inc.



Thank you for your interest and support of CASA of Central Virginia.

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