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VOICES FOR CHILDREN CASA OF CENTRAL VIRGINIA



Issue No. 11

November 2011

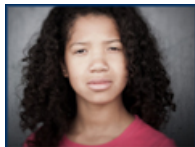
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Message from the Executive Director **Count Your Blessings**

The fall of the year is the time when we all count our blessings. In these difficult economic times, it is a blessing to have a warm house, food on the table and a comfortable lifestyle. Volunteers are a blessing to the children to whose cases they are assigned. We count our blessings for having YOU as a CASA volunteer! Thank you for all that you do!

Find us on [Facebook](#)



**Click this link
to watch
"I Am for the Child"
Campaign Video**

**Donate
Now**

Donate securely through
Click and Pledge

September Activity

66 Volunteers
Assigned
181 Children Served by
Program
36 New Children

The fall of the year is also the time when we send out a request to friends, donors and volunteers to contribute to CASA of Central VA. It is difficult to ask volunteers to make a monetary contribution to CASA of Central VA. Volunteers give so generously of their time. They also have out-of-pocket expenses connected with their volunteering, such as gas for travel and the costs of simple outings with their CASA children. On the other hand, people who believe in the mission of CASA are the best prospects for donors. No one is more aware of the good work being done and is more committed to CASA than CASA volunteers.

There are many ways that you can contribute monetarily to CASA of Central VA. Here are some suggestions:

1. Purchase a starfish necklace for \$20.00 for someone special on your gift list. These come in gift boxes with "The Starfish Story" included on a card. (Go to our website, www.cvcassa.org if you would like to see what the starfish necklaces look like.)
2. Purchase a starfish ornament for \$10.00. These are a new item for 2011 and also come with the gift box and "The Starfish Story." (A photo of the starfish ornaments are also on the website.)
3. Make a gift in honor of or in memory of someone. I will send a holiday message informing the honoree or family of your thoughtfulness.
4. Ask someone to make a gift to CASA instead of giving you a gift. I'll send you a holiday message informing you of the person's thoughtfulness.
5. Ask someone to make a contribution to CASA because you believe in the program.
6. Check about whether your company has a matching gift program.
7. Make a contribution of a minimum of \$50.00 to the United Way of Central VA, designated to CASA of Central VA (agency code 1110). Payroll deduction makes this a painless and pre-tax way to give. Imagine pledging just \$1.00 per week, for a total contribution of \$52. Donations can be made to CASA of Central VA through any United Way program, so tell your friends and family about this option.
8. Contributions may also be made to CASA by state employees through the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign (CVC) and by federal employees through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Mention this to any friends or family who work for a state or a federal program.

How to make a gift:

1. Mail your tax-deductible check made payable to CASA of Central VA to P. O. Box 11373, Lynchburg, VA 24506.
2. Go to our website, www.cvcasa.org and click on the "Donate" button. This will take you to a page where you can enter your credit card information securely. Your credit card donation is also tax-deductible. Or you may

17 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

simply click on the button on the left side of this page to make your donation now.

3. Come by the Fort Early Exec. Building, second floor, (11 Oakridge Blvd., across from Lancaster Furniture Gallery) and purchase a starfish necklace or a starfish ornament. (You may also purchase a starfish necklace or a starfish ornament on the website, but there is a shipping and handling fee added of \$5.00 and \$3.00 for ornaments. (Please call us first at (434) 528-2552 to make sure that someone is in the office when you want to drop by.)
4. Check with your employer about workplace giving options.

It was the great philanthropist John D. Rockefeller who referred to giving as "not a duty but a privilege." I hope you will share Mr. Rockefeller's sentiments and give to CASA of Central VA. Thank you for caring and for sharing.

Jane Francis

Congratulations New CASA Volunteer Inductees

Buy a Beautiful Starfish Ornament for \$10



CASA of Central Virginia is pleased to announce the induction of twelve CASA Volunteers on October 27, 2011 at the Amherst Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. The Honorable Michael Garrett performed the swearing-in ceremony. A reception for the volunteers and their families followed the ceremony. Fifteen CASA Volunteers completed training on October 20th. Three volunteers unable to attend the ceremony will be inducted at a later date - Mary Hughes, Christina Overstreet and Sunny Simone.



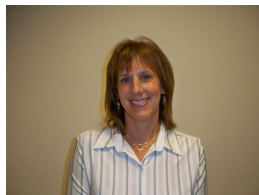
Pictured from left to right on back row, Sarah Wilson, Sharon Lane, Katie Childress, Helen Smith, Jerry Outlaw, Christine Hoyne. Front row from left to right, Adrienne Phillips, Mary Ann Lacy, Cindy Bomar, Etta Ashwell, Judge Garrett, Barbara Washington (class instructor), Maria Morales and Jocelyn Jones.

The Connection
THE CONNECTION MAGAZINE

News and Information from the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association

Cover Story: Working with Impoverished Families

[Click to Read](#)



Volunteer Spotlight
Ellissa Bowen

Advocate Manager: Angela Mayfield
Court served: Bedford County
Occupation: Mom and Volunteer
Length of time as a CASA volunteer: 2 years

Most Memorable CASA Moment: The most memorable CASA moment for me is one that created tears of joy when a family I was working with was reunited and the children were able to go home. The family expressed so much thanks and appreciation to me that I knew all of the hours spent working on the case, spending time with the children, and discussing issues with the family were hours well spent. Though all cases do not end with such a happy ending, there are many more opportunities for me as a CASA to experience this satisfying heartfelt moment again.

Helpful Links

- [CASA of Central Virginia](#)
- [National CASA Association](#)
- [Virginia's Judicial System](#)
- [Virginia Department of Social Services](#)
- [Voices for Virginia's Children](#)





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**United Way
 of Central Virginia
 Partner Agency**

One example of how your advocacy made a difference on a case: I had a case where the children were removed from the home. The father was charged and incarcerated at the onset of the case. The mother was not charged in the case, but the severity of the case and questions concerning the mother's involvement led to the children's removal. After talking to involved parties, looking at all the facts and information I had available to me, and visiting and getting to know the family, I truly felt it was in the best interest of the children to return them to the home. I was confident their home was safe and their mother was not a danger to them. Additionally, I felt being away from the mother would have had long lasting traumatic effects on the children unnecessarily. I truly believe my report impacted the judge's decision to return the children home to their mother that day.

What means the most to you about being a CASA volunteer? The impact of the decisions made by the judge regarding the children has a lifelong effect on the children. Being able to contribute to the decision-making process by presenting facts, information, and a recommendation to the judge is very satisfying. However, what means the most to me about being a CASA volunteer is that the process truly makes a difference by helping the children down a path to a brighter future.

Advocate Manager Guidance and Support Corner

Helpful Tips for Maintaining Positive Collaboration for Positive Outcomes for Children

As CASA Advocates we work with many other "team" players as we all work toward a positive outcome for children and families. The system can be frustrating at times and often it feels that things are not moving fast enough! CASA Advocates work tirelessly and with such passion. Your dedication to children and families is amazing! Who has not heard the adage, "Patience is a Virtue"? With the timetable that we, as CASA volunteers have to submit our court reports and with all of the parties we need to contact to gather information for that report, it is sometimes easy to forget that everyone is *not* on "our" schedule. After all, we're volunteering our precious time and expensive mileage to do this very important work - and we have our own families, jobs, friends and other interests that take up a great deal of our days. Your work is invaluable!

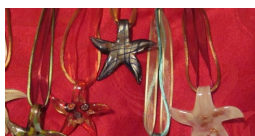
As CASA Advocates, it is also important to remember that the professionals and families we work with have very hectic schedules as well. We should strive to respect others' schedules and realize that, while we may have free time at a certain time; they may not be in the same situation. Social workers have many cases they are dealing with at a time and are often out of the office for required home visits. Don't fret if they are unable to return a call in a reasonable amount of time and remember your Advocate Manager can assist you when necessary. GAL's also are trying to balance a full practice with their caseload and may take time to return a call or an email. Our families are often balancing work, child care and court ordered services, so it is very important to be respectful and patient and as accommodating as possible. We want our families to succeed! It is a balancing act for all parties involved in a case, and we all need to strive to pick our battles when necessary, respect others' time and commitments and be understanding. After all, we are all working toward the same goal: A safe, permanent home for children.

Some Tips for Productively Respecting Others' Time
 Productivity and good manners often go hand-in-hand, and we all strive to be productive and to be viewed as being polite. Unfortunately, when we are less than productive, we often throw our good manners out the window. I'm reminded of a quote: "Lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part." Notice that most of these tips are simply issues of respect (good manners).

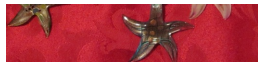
[Read the Entire Article](#)
 Angela Mayfield

Submitted by

Volunteers Needed to Help Sell Starfish Ornaments and Necklaces!



Please call Jane or Anne at (434) 528-2552 if you are able to help sell starfish necklaces and ornaments at the Lynchburg Community Market (1219 Main Street in Downtown Lynchburg) on any of the following times/dates:
 November 11 - 2-6 p.m.



[Starfish Ornaments Flyer](#)

November 16 - 2-6 p.m.
November 30 - 2-6 p.m.
December 3 - 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
December 10 - 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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

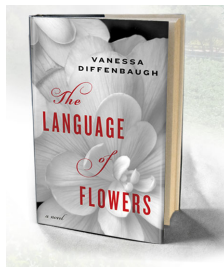
Applications are being accepted for our Spring Volunteer training. Classes are scheduled to begin March 1, 2012 and run through May 10, 2012. They will be held on Thursday evenings from 5:30-8:30 in the Chapel at Presbyterian Homes and Family Services in Lynchburg.



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**

***The Language of Flowers*, Vanessa**

Diffenbaugh's mesmerizing, moving, and elegantly written debut novel, beautifully weaves past and present, creating a vivid portrait of an unforgettable young woman whose gift for flowers helps her change the lives of others even as she struggles to overcome her own troubled past.

As the book [The Language of Flowers](#) opens, Victoria Jones is turning eighteen. After spending her entire life in foster care-abandoned at birth, bounced through foster homes for years-Victoria's birthday signifies that she is emancipating and entering the world on her own as an adult. Like many foster alumni, she is not ready.

The challenges faced by youth who age out of foster care are numerous. Recently, Michael Piraino wrote about the [troubling reality](#) for many youth who emancipate from foster care: more than 25 percent experience homelessness at least once after leaving foster care; less than half are employed at age 23-24; and nearly 1 in 4 have a high school diploma or a GED.

(<http://blog.casaforchildren.org/blog/foster-care/language-flowers/>)

Advocate Manager Angela Mayfield review: From the very first chapter, the author was able to pull the reader in with riveting and realistic descriptions of the experiences that Victoria had endured during her time in the foster care system. The book (while fiction) depicts with great emotion the struggles of our foster care youth aging out of the system. This book was a great read from start to finish.

Library Resources funded by



Upcoming Events

Bedford Brown Bag Lunch - Join us November 3rd from 11:30-1:00 at the Bedford Central Library. Guest Speaker from Bedford Social Services CPS Unit. RSVP to Angela Mayfield at 540-586-4932 or

Angela@cvcasa.org

[Bedford Brown Bag Flyer](#)

From Place to Place Movie and Discussion - This movie/documentary follows three teens who have aged out of the foster care system.

November 5, 2011 from 10:00 am -12:00 pm at the Farmington Club House

Theater, 1053 Helmsdale Drive in Forest, VA. Contact Connie Shannon at 332-2200 or Connie@cvcasa.org

National Adoption Day November 19th - The Lynchburg and Campbell County J&DR Court will be holding ceremonies to finalize and acknowledge adoptions of children in foster care from the past year and celebrate adoptive families.

CASA In-Service Training - Join us November 18th on the 5th floor of LDSS from 11:30-1:00 for Autism: A Working Perspective presented by Heather Showalter, Director of Program Services of the Hughes Center. Contact Jennifer Martin at 434-455-5835 or Jennifer@cvcasa.org [Flyer for Autism Training](#)

Bedford Domestic Violence Coalition Annual Conference - "I'm Okay, I'm Fine...the lies abused women tell themselves" and "The Assessment and Treatment of Domestic Violence Offenders" November 18, 2011 8:00-3:45 at Central Virginia Community College, Bedford Campus [DV Conference Registration Form](#)

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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