



**CASA**

Court Appointed Special Advocates  
**FOR CHILDREN**

COLES COUNTY CASA

# CASA News

Coles County Court Appointed Special Advocates  
PO Box 1074, Charleston, IL 61920  
217-348-0599

[www.colescountycasa.org](http://www.colescountycasa.org)

## Spring 2012

### Board of Directors

Susan Bartlett  
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Mary Bower  
Sarah Greider  
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Mike Havey  
Tami Knight  
Jill Nilsen  
Todd J. Vilardo  
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Dale Wolf

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Susan Bulla

### Advocate Coordinator

Kristen Bertrand

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Dale Wolf

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Todd Vilardo

Treasurer:  
Tami Knight

Secretary:  
Susan Bartlett

**Mission: Coles County CASA is a not-for-profit corporation that advocates for the best interests of abused and neglected children brought into the Coles County juvenile court system.**

### I Am For The Child

When abused and/or neglected children come into the Coles County juvenile court system, they have usually been removed from the only home they have known and are living with a foster family. Home routines are different, the food is different, the siblings are different, the school is different and the neighborhood kids are different. What a stressful time! They often don't understand what has happened or why it has happened. They often do understand that mommy or daddy has made a mistake but from their point of view, they are the ones being punished!

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) play a unique role in their work with abused and neglected children. The advocate spends time with the child. They learn what the child likes and dislikes, what they fear, and where they want to live. The advocate becomes their friend. The advocate is for that child. He or she will do everything they can to ensure that the child is in a safe, permanent home as quickly as possible. There are many ways that you can help CASA to be for the child. You can volunteer, make a donation, attend the May Day Longaberger Basket Binga, or purchase a raffle ticket for the Casa for CASA. Thank you for helping each abused or neglected child in Coles County to have someone that is for them.

### CASA Receives Contribution From Amin Foundation

The Coles County Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) organization recently received a \$5,000 donation from the Amin Foundation.

The Amin Foundation, based in Corona, Calif., is led by chief trustee Dr. Chirag Amin, MD, who is formerly of Mattoon.

Susan Bulla CASA Executive Director, and Susan Bartlett, CASA Secretary, accepted the contribution from Dr. Amin's mother, Nirmala Amin.

"Coles County CASA is extremely thankful for the generous contribution from the Amin Foundation," said Bulla. "This contribution will aid us in our mission to recruit, train and monitor volunteers who advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children."



Susan Bartlett, CASA secretary; Nirmala Amin; and Susan Bulla, CASA executive director.



## MAY DAY BINGA!



Our Annual Longaberger Binga will be held on Tuesday, May 1 at the American Legion, 1903 Maple St. in Mattoon. Doors open at 5:00 and early bird games begin at 5:30.

Tickets are \$10 for 10 games. Additional game tickets are available. Door prizes, pull-tabs, and raffles will be included. Dinner and snacks will also be available. Plan to attend and bring your friends to win some fabulous prizes! Tickets can be purchased on our website.

## The Advocate

This is not about rescue, so as to feel good when the child lights up with a smile. This is not about the comfort of compassion. This is hard work, struggling with ripped families and children in clouds of pain, anger dancing around in their hearts

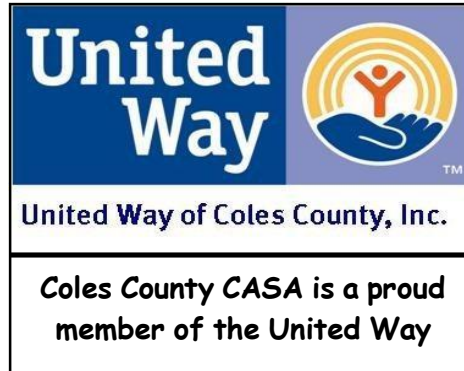
in the turmoil of a world made crazy. This is caring, yes, but also what is just, what should be demanded.

It takes love and a certain measure of courage. And in the simple act of person helping person, It becomes extraordinary.

- Mercedes Lawry  
(former Communications Director, National CASA)

April is National Child Abuse Awareness Month!

Thank you!



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Many thanks to the law firm of Hefner, Eberspacher & Tapella, LLC, for providing an attorney at no cost to Coles County CASA! Thank you to Devin Mills for representing us so well.

Find us on Facebook! Friend us at : Coles County CASA for Children.

Special Thanks to.....  
Charleston Carnegie  
Public Library  
Monthly Meeting Room



## Volunteer Spotlight



Coles County Board of Directors  
Secretary

Susan Bartlett

**What led to your involvement with CASA?**

When I first moved to Charleston there was an article in the paper about CASA. I was a stay at home Mom with two preschoolers. The mission of CASA touched me in a way that no other organization had.

As a young mother, I

was horrified by the thought of parents putting their children in harm's way. I had a desire to help these children to find safety, security, and happiness. I tucked away in my mind that "someday" I wanted to be involved in this organization. That someday came when I met Mamie Richey. We were at a summer league baseball game and I overheard her talking about her involvement with CASA. I told her about my desire to do something for the organization, maybe that I could be an advocate. Mamie brought me into the organization as a board member.

**How long have you been involved with CASA?**  
I have been involved since 2005.

**What do you enjoy about your involvement with CASA?**

The children that CASA serves are the reason for my involvement. I have never met face-to-face with any of these children but know of their stories. I have been able to use my strengths to work with others and keep CASA moving forward!!

**What are your challenges as a board member?**

The challenges that our board faces are mainly financial. The CASA organization has many wonderful advocates and supporters. It is wonderful to live in a community that is willing to support the mission of CASA. It still surprises us, though, how many community members have never heard of CASA, and that is a goal we are working on now. We would like to become more visible in the community.

**What keeps you motivated in your work for CASA?**

My motivation? The children. Just the thought that here in our community there are children that are abused or neglected keeps me working. Doing something, even something small, could lead to safety for even one of those children. Sometimes, when we are wrapped up in the fundraising and the day to day grind, it helps to step back and think about what your motivation is and it is as simple as two words - the children.

### Casa for CASA 2012

Send in this form to buy a raffle ticket for the 2012 Casa for CASA.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of tickets: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: Coles County CASA

Mail to: Coles County CASA - P.O. Box 1074 - Charleston, IL 61920

Tickets: 1 for \$5 • 5 for \$20 • 15 for \$50 • 50 for \$100

**Can You Help Coles County CASA Advocate for Children?**

- Friend of CASA**    \$0 - \$99    Name \_\_\_\_\_
- Silver Level**    \$100 - \$249    Address \_\_\_\_\_
- Gold Level**    \$250 - \$499    City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_
- Platinum Level**    \$500 - \$999    Phone # \_\_\_\_\_
- Millennium Level**    \$1000 and up    Email address \_\_\_\_\_
- I am interested in becoming an advocate.**    I prefer newsletter delivery by  **U.S. Mail**     **Email**

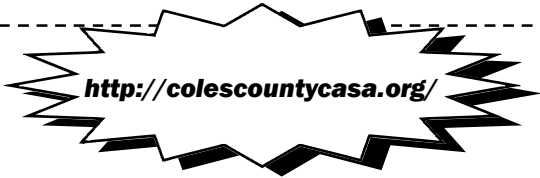
**This gift is in honor of** \_\_\_\_\_ **\* Your donation to CASA is**

**This gift is in memory of** \_\_\_\_\_ **tax deductible.**

**Please notify** \_\_\_\_\_ **Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to Coles County CASA, P.O. Box 1074, Charleston, IL 61920



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