

****SAVE THE DATE****

**THE BEAT GOES ON!!!!
MUSIC OF THE BABY BOOMERS**

*Jack Everly, the BSO SuperPops
and special guest vocalists
bring you all the music that
raised America's most
notorious generation!*

CASABaltimore
"Here's to Helping Children"
CONCERT AND SILENT AUCTION
SUNDAY MARCH 18, 2007
3:00PM



Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall
1212 Cathedral ST
Baltimore, MD 21201

*Ticket includes Concert, Silent Auction and
Great Food after the concert in the Meyerhoff Lounge*
**Proceeds from "Here's to Helping Kids" will benefit
CASABaltimore to help abused and neglected children in
Baltimore City.**



The Starfish

Newsletter for CASA Volunteer Advocates

September/October 2006

Volume 04 Edition 5



The Holidays at **CASA**



I know that it's not even Halloween yet but you know as well as I do that before we know it the holiday season will be upon us. It's such a nice time of year to look forward to but it is always so hectic. Here at **CASA Baltimore**, we try to mark the holiday season with a get-together for all our volunteers so you'll be hearing from us soon about this!!

It is due to the concern and generosity of many individuals, groups and businesses in our community that **CASA** of Baltimore is able to bring some holiday cheer to our **CASA** children. Gifts for **CASA** children are donated and we ask the **CASA** volunteers to distribute the gifts to the children they work with. You will hear more about this very soon but

meanwhile, start to think about what your **CASA** child wants or needs for a gift and talk to your supervisor about your ideas. If you know of any groups or businesses that might have an interest in contributing gifts, please let us know!!

STAFF CHANGES at CASABaltimore

Please join me in welcoming a new staff person to **CASA**. Carolyn McQuaige Howard began employment as a Supervisor of Volunteers in September. Carolyn comes to **CASA** from many years of honorable service to Baltimore's children with the Baltimore City Department of Social Services. She has retired after 34 years And is looking forward to her work with **CASA** and our volunteers.

CASABaltimore is really fortunate to have Carolyn on staff and she will take an active role in training volunteers along with her supervisory responsibilities. She joins Nora Frenkeil, Phyllis Felton and Linda Koban who continue to help recruit, to train and to provide supervision to **CASA** volunteers. And to help everyone along, Christina Fontecchio, a graduate student of Public Health at Johns Hopkins, is providing assistance on a part-time basis. Any and all staff can be reached at 410-244-1465. We are here to help and support you!!

The Starfish is a publication of CASA Baltimore a 501C3 non-profit organization registered with the State of Maryland. It is printed six times a year. Any comments or submissions should be sent to our editor: Linda Koban @ lindarosek@aol.com or 410-244-1465. We reserve the right to accept, reject or edit any submissions to our publication. CASA Baltimore PO Box 13004, Baltimore, MD 21203.

****SAVE THE DATE!!!!****

**Saturday, November 18th at
Howard County Community College**

Maryland CASA Training Project
(Training programs offered to the Baltimore-Washington
area CASA programs)

A morning of exciting learning opportunities
that includes:

- ◆ Breakfast
- ◆ Keynote Speaker Liz Bowie of the
Baltimore Sun
- ◆ Your choice of workshops on incarcerated
parents, AIDS, educational needs of children,
Psychiatric issues and more.

Hope you can make it...More details will be sent soon!

Upcoming Training Class & Volunteer Orientations

Next Training Class will begin on
Monday, November 6, 2006

Volunteer Orientations are scheduled for:
Tuesday, October 24, 2006
Tuesday, December 12, 2006

Starfish Award

Andrea Le Winter

Andrea Le Winter came full circle when she joined **CASA** as a volunteer. Following her work as an attorney in Washington State representing the state in juvenile dependency cases and her work as a lawyer/guardian ad litem for foster care children in New York City, Andrea came fully-equipped to take on a challenging case.

“I think my legal background was helpful in understanding the way the system works,” she said, “but my expectations of myself were higher. I didn’t realize how you could be beaten down by the Baltimore system.”

A year ago Andrea, a mother of two, took on the case of two siblings – a 9-year-old boy and a 5-year-old girl. Her goal was finding permanency for these children as soon as possible.

The girl “Catherine,” was in a pre-adoptive home where she had been living for two years. Her brother “Jason” had been living there with her until the previous year when he was moved to a therapeutic group home.

Jason had made excellent progress in the group home and Catherine was on track to adoption when Andrea arrived on the scene. But things were about to change. Jason was one of the youngest boys at the group home and the clinical team agreed that he needed to move into a foster home. Progress had been slow so Andrea made constant calls to speed up the move to a foster home and to ensure that the transition was a smooth one. She checked in regularly after he arrived to

make certain that educational, medical, and therapeutic issues were resolved as quickly as possible.

Meanwhile, Andrea had concerns about Catherine’s placement. Despite appearances, the caretaker was expressing ambivalence about adoption and Catherine’s behavior reflected this uncertainty.

Also, the children’s mother reappeared and visitation resumed. A third sibling was born who also entered the foster care system.

Things quickly fell apart.

Although Jason had loved living in his foster home, he unexpectedly started acting out and finally ran away. Catherine’s pre-adoptive placement did fall apart and she was mistakenly placed with a foster parent who was trained for teenagers, not young children. Andrea is dealing with both these issues now. “I don’t see permanency for these children in the foreseeable future and that’s frustrating for me,” she said. “But the good side of this work is that I do feel I’ve been able to influence things on an immediate level.”

She said she continues to remind herself that, “You’re helping kids down a very long road. However frustrating it is for you, it must be that much more exponentially difficult for them.”

--- By Nora Frenkiel

