

## CASA OF TERREBONNE



## OCTOBER 2020 NEWSLETTER



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*Message from Donna Brunet, Executive Director*

World Mental Health Day is on October 10 and due to the many stresses of 2020, everyone deserves a mental health day for themselves. We have not only had to deal with the Covid 19 pandemic but also having our children home from school, businesses being shut down, not having contact with family and friends, the political climate, and then to top it all off – hurricanes!!

Getting caught up in the day-to-day routine called life happens to all of us. We exert ourselves to meet deadlines and struggle to stay awake through meetings. We suffer from lack of sleep and strive to balance our family life with our work. After a while, it all adds up to one big stress bomb that has us thinking “I need a vacation.”

So take a day for yourself to ease your mind, better your physical health and come back revitalized. Here are five tips to help you plan a great mental health day:

***Assess Your Needs***

Maybe you're exhausted and need to sleep in and lay in bed until noon. Or perhaps you don't want to think about absolutely anything and veg in front of the TV all day in your pajamas.

***Have a Little Fun***

Whether it's something simple like reading a book, going fishing or heading to the beach. It's important to do something that makes you smile.

***Stay Away from Social Media and Emails***

This one is crucial, and it might be the hardest one on this list to achieve. Whether you planned your mental health day weeks in advance or decided you needed this day when you woke up, just remember that this is only *one* day.

***Savor a Delicious Meal***

This one is self-explanatory.

***End the Day with Gratitude***

Remember to appreciate this mental health day, as so many people don't take the time to have them.

***Wishing everyone a safe and happy Halloween!***

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**CASA STAFF**

**Donna Brunet ~ Executive Director**  
**Jenny Domangue ~ Lead Advocate Supervisor**  
**Christine Aucoin ~ Outreach/Training Coordinator**  
**Sulma Reyes ~ Advocate Supervisor**  
**Valentine Verdin ~ Advocate Supervisor**  
**Anna Merlos ~ Office Manager/Marketing Coordinator**

**“Meet a CASA”.** Each month, CASA of Terrebonne will randomly choose a volunteer for the readers of this newsletter to meet. We want people to realize that they share many of the same characteristics as our volunteers.



This month's meet a CASA is a little bit different than our average volunteer. Carl "Buddy" McNabb has been a board member for over 10 years and President for 5 of those years. He has been an influential part of everything CASA is and stands for. However, when he would try to get others to volunteer he was met with "Why don't you?" So, a year ago, he took that leap and became a volunteer. Buddy has advocated for a total of 3 children, 2 of whom have been reunified with their mother and the third who is on her way to adoption.

Buddy has been married for 26 years to Claire McNabb. He has 3 adult children, Jenni, Mike and Zack, and 2 grandchildren, Marli and Grier. Buddy is a retired oilfield salesman who now manages multiple rent houses which keep him busy. Claire is still employed and works full time in the shipbuilding industry.

Buddy enjoys a little fishing, a little golf and a lot of cooking. He states he has always enjoyed cooking, so making sure his hard-working wife doesn't go hungry is a chore he enjoys. Before 2020 and COVID, Claire and Buddy would spend many weekends in New Orleans, walking the city, enjoying great restaurants and occasional cocktails. They both love live music and dancing.

Buddy was born and raised in Houma. He believes that Houma is that perfect in between city - not too big, and not too small. He says, "It was a great place to raise my children. The people here are friendly, kind, and helpful for the most part. We have everything we need here without the hassles of big city life, not to mention that we are surrounded by a wildlife paradise."

A fun fact that Buddy would like us to know is that he is a superstar singer....in his shower!! He says he is REALLY, REALLY GOOD, but can't carry a tune once he is out of the shower. The world will just never know!

When asked what advice he would give to someone thinking about joining CASA, he said, "So many of us say that we want to make things better. Some do by donating or supporting causes. This is of course important and noteworthy, but time is such a valuable commodity, volunteers are hard to come by. Four to five hours a month of your time can make such a huge difference in a child's life. Please join us in helping make the world a little better place. There is plenty of room in heaven for CASA's."

Thank you, Buddy McNabb, for ALL you do for the mission, the organization and the staff! We appreciate you!

### **Current Board Members**

**Martin Majewski, III—President**  
**Mary Guidry—Vice President**  
**Bonnie Naquin—Treasurer**  
**Shelly Touns—Secretary**

**Charles Brown, Sr.**  
**Christopher Chiasson**  
**Patricia Floyd**

**Heather Hebert**  
**Charles Kornegay**  
**Buddy McNabb**  
**Angelle Thibodeaux**

# SEPTEMBER VOLUNTEER STATISTICS

**47**

VOLUNTEER  
ADVOCATES



**75**

CASA  
CHILDREN  
SERVED



**109**

HOURS SPENT  
ADVOCATING



**620**

MILES  
TRAVELED BY  
ADVOCATES



**141**

CHILDREN  
ON THE  
WAITING LIST



**Breakdown of Waiting List Cases: Sexual (8) — Physical (11) — Neglect (69) — Substance Abuse (53)**

## SUPERVISOR'S CORNER

Please remember that remaining in contact with your CASA children is of the utmost importance. Last month we saw a dramatic increase in contact and for that I thank you. Please keep it up.

As we enter into a new school year, our kids who struggle are beginning to feel the effects of a school year that was instantly ended. Remember that we have our **Traveling Tutors program**. If your child needs a tutor, submit an application on our website or contact your supervisor.

**Effective immediately**, every staff member and volunteer is required to take the Louisiana Mandatory Reporter training. You can find this information under the training section of this newsletter. You have until June 30, 2021 to finish this training.

### **August stats for children:**

**73** children assigned a CASA

**43** children seen face-to-face

**22** children contacted any other way (phone, FaceTime, mail)

**89%** of children were contacted

**59%** of children were seen face-to-face

## We Appreciate Your Commitment and Service to CASA OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

Jennifer Burrough

1 Year

Priscilla Callais

1 Year

Gina Danos

1 Year

Patricia Floyd

1 Year

Buddy McNabb

1 Year

Claire McNabb

1 Year

## FINDING FOREVER HOMES



Ann Beeson with  
CASA children on  
their adoption day.



## SHOUT OUTS

- ◇ Traci Hawthorne for completing her continuing education hours for 2020 and entering them into Optima.
- ◇ Kristy Ledford for attending a court hearing for her CASA children.
- ◇ Carol Bergeron and Penny Hebert for submitting a court report and attending a court hearing for their CASA child.
- ◇ Amber Berry for accepting her first case.
- ◇ Brian Elliott for submitting a court report for his CASA child.
- ◇ Tim Hitt for attending a court hearing for his CASA children.
- ◇ Ann Beeson for staying on her case until closing with both children being adopted.  
(see pictures above)
- ◇ Tasha Lirette for attending a court hearing for her CASA children.
- ◇ Mary Guidry for attending a court hearing and staying on her case until it closed with reunification.
- ◇ Nicole Reiss for accepting her first case.
- ◇ Linda Ford for staying on her case until closing with both children being adopted.
- ◇ Yvonne White for attending a court hearing for her CASA children.
- ◇ Norma Macks for submitting a court report and attending a court hearing for her CASA child.
- ◇ Silvana Brown for submitting a court report and attending a court hearing for her CASA children.
- ◇ Tija Hopkins for accepting her first case.
- ◇ Emily Gilmore for submitting a court report and attending a court hearing for her CASA child.
- ◇ Carey Redmond for submitting a letter to the court and attending a court hearing for her CASA children.
- ◇ Rhonda Lovell for submitting a court report for her CASA children.
- ◇ Alicia Dove for submitting a court report and attending a court hearing for her CASA children.



<b>Anna Merlos</b>	<b>9/21</b>
<b>Jacob Ghere</b>	<b>10/2</b>
<b>Kathleen Andrews</b>	<b>10/9</b>
<b>Ann Beeson</b>	<b>10/9</b>
<b>Charles Bergeron</b>	<b>10/11</b>
<b>Mary Guidry</b>	<b>10/11</b>
<b>Blayne Bergeron</b>	<b>10/19</b>
<b>Claire McNabb</b>	<b>10/26</b>
<b>Miranda Price</b>	<b>10/26</b>
<b>Iori Olivier</b>	<b>10/28</b>
<b>Terissa Boquet</b>	<b>10/30</b>

**CONGRATULATIONS  
TO  
TIM  
HITT!!**



He has won a gift card of his choice for visiting with his CASA children and putting in his contact logs by the last day of the month.

To be entered into the monthly drawing, volunteers must see their CASA children and enter contact logs by the last day of the month.

### Check out the following for continuing education hours:

⇒ **THIS TRAINING IS MANDATORY FOR ALL VOLUNTEERS AND MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE JUNE 2021.**

<https://moodle.lcwta.org/enrol/index.php?id=376> **(1.5 Credit hours)**

This training will help you learn your rights and obligations as a mandated reporter. In return, you will help keep children safe in your role as a CASA volunteer.

⇒ Webinar: Advocating for Medically Fragile Children in Foster Care **(1 Credit hour)**

[https://zoom.us/rec/share/y8t1Lrfh82pIY5Htq0fCoU\\_AdrgT6a8hydl\\_PIMnRv2EaqOI6i7kNyX-uDNS2St?startTime=1595612654000](https://zoom.us/rec/share/y8t1Lrfh82pIY5Htq0fCoU_AdrgT6a8hydl_PIMnRv2EaqOI6i7kNyX-uDNS2St?startTime=1595612654000)

⇒ Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder from a Trauma Lens **(1 Credit hour)**

<https://www.nfpati.org/courses/FASDfromaTraumaLens>

⇒ *Documentary: All Rise for the Good of the Children* **(1 Credit hour)**

<https://allriseforchildren.com/watch-the-film/>

This film spotlights the effort of one small court in East Texas to change odds and improve the system for the people of Smith County.

⇒ **TBRI Fridays** Click the link to register for upcoming trainings:

<https://crossroadsnola.org/tbri-fridays/>



## SEPTEMBER DONATIONS & GRANTS

CASA - AP

Four anonymous Facebook donors

Brian Powell

*Thank You*

Add these two important dates to your calendar !!



### BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW!

#### FIVE FUN FACTS ABOUT ANGELLE THIBODEAUX, BOARD MEMBER



1. She enjoys traveling with her family.
2. She's always ready to bargain shop.
3. She has an irrational fear of revolving doors.
4. She loves riding roller coasters.
5. She is passionate about advocating for children in need and proud to serve as a member of the CASA Board.