

# THE CASA BULLETIN

CASA of Terrebonne, INC.



## MEET A CASA

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This month we would like to introduce you to Sherry Mahaney. Sherry was sworn-in November 2020. Since becoming a CASA volunteer, she in total has worked three cases for a total of nine children. Sherry is a lifelong resident of Houma, La. She has been married to Paul Mahaney for 17 years. She has two daughters, Mandy, and Kari, three granddaughters, Kaylee, Kelsi and Danae', and a Yorkie named Mollie. She is currently living a retired lifestyle. She enjoys spending her days playing online backgammon and spades. She also enjoys traveling. Prior to retired life, Sherry was a teacher in the Terrebonne Parish school system. She spent 20 years teaching mostly fifth grade at Elysian Fields Elementary School.

Sherry joined CASA along with her daughter Kari Griffin. Sherry had previously heard of CASA but was unsure of what we did or what role she could play. When Kari approached her with interest in joining CASA, Sherry began to dig a little deeper and

researched the CASA of Terrebonne program. While doing her research she came across CASA of Terrebonne's recruitment video where many of our current volunteers ended their interview with "Just do it". She and Kari decided to take the leap and join our CASA family and was sworn in November 2020. Sherry and Kari worked their first two cases together. For her latest case Sherry has ventured out on her own. Sherry shared that she feels as though she makes a positive impact on the children she serves by focusing on their best interests. She says, "We become a part of that child's life and they know who we are and look forward to our monthly visits." When asked what advice she would give to someone who was thinking about becoming a CASA volunteer she echoed the words that brought her to CASA of Terrebonne, "Just do it"!

*A CASA polo will be donated to this month's CASA Volunteer by Shelly Toups at Artistic Embroidery.*



# Family Preservation Court

## Supporting Families of Addiction

BY EDWARD OLIVIER

As an advocate of many years I've noticed that there is one thing that never changes in this constantly changing world and that's change. We face new challenges with every passing year. Substance abuse and addiction has been a factor in a large percentage of our cases the last few years. Addiction is a small word for a big demon. Like most mental illnesses, addiction is generally misunderstood, and treatment is a complex journey to say the least.

As a CASA supervisor I have had the opportunity to sit in on Family Preservation Court, and it has had a profound effect on how I see mental illness and addiction. Family Preservation Court is a unique program that brings together therapist, social workers, CASA representatives, attorneys, the Assistant District Attorney and a Judge from the 32nd Judicial District to form the ultimate support system for parents trying to reunify with their children.

Many people are under the impression that once someone goes through

detox, they have the substance out of their system and that it is now just matter of keeping it that way, but there's so much more. Full rehab is detox, therapy, and lots of supportive fellowship that will go on for life. Therapy will search for the root cause of the addiction. This is often trauma from a person's past that was not properly dealt with. Once the trauma is determined the triggers need to be defined. A trigger will suddenly bring that trauma freshly to the forefront of the mind. When trauma and triggers are recognized, a plan can be put together to carve out a successful strategy to deal with those triggers and lead to sobriety.

The Family Preservation Court team meets with participants every two weeks to offer counseling and support as well as services tailored to their particular needs. Additional support groups are always recommended such as AA or ALANON, etc. and the team of councilors will always be ready with the right referrals. Family Preservation Court is a positive, judge free zone (well there is one judge) where people can get effective solutions to their challenges.

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## Latest Program Stats

43

Active Volunteer Advocates

66

CASA Children Served



141

**children waiting for a CASA**

## CASA STAFF

CHRISTINE AUCOIN

*Executive Director*

JENNY DOMANGUE

*Lead Advocate Supervisor*

ANNA MERLOS

*Office Manager/  
Marketing Coordinator*

EDWARD OLIVIER

*Advocate Supervisor*

SULMA REYES

*Outreach/Training  
Coordinator*

VALENTINE VERDIN

*Advocate Supervisor*

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# Welcome the 2023 Board of Directors



**Reis Prevost**  
President



**Mary Guidry**  
Vice -President



**Bonnie Naquin**  
Treasurer



**Shelly Toups**  
Secretary

**OUR MISSION**

*CASA of Terrebonne's mission is to be a voice for children in foster care by advocating independently and objectively in the courts for their best interest.*



**Rev. Charles Brown**



**Cindy Courville**



**Cindy Doiron**



**Justin Lirette**



**Martin Majewski, III**



**Buddy McNabb**



**Tim Stevens**





## VOLUNTEER SHOUT-OUTS

- **Molly Arrington** - Thank You for writing your first court report for your case! Congrats on seeing the case to closing, with the child going home with her parent!!
- **Ann Beeson** - Thanks for attending the Family Team Meeting and your CASA child's court hearing. Your court report was spectacular!
- **Jennifer Bonvillian** - Thank you so much for all your hard work on your case! Congrats on seeing your case to the child going home with his mother!!
- **Priscilla Callais** - Congratulations on taking on a new case. You are truly a rock star and we are excited to have you back!
- **Corree Eschete** - Thank you for attending your CASA child's Family Team Meeting and Family Preservation Court. Your dedication to seeing this child return home is a beautiful thing to see.
- **Kim Eubanks** - Thank you for writing your court report and being present in court for your CASA children. You are doing such an excellent job.
- **Mia Foret** - You are so awesome to step up and advocate for two siblings that need someone in their corner. I know you'll make a difference for those kids.
- **Emily Gilmore** - Thank you for stepping in on a case that needed an advocate so badly! You are amazing!
- **Kristy Ledford and Leah Voisin** - Congratulations on seeing your case to closing!! Finally, all three children are adopted and in their forever homes! You ladies rock!!
- **Sherry Mahaney** - Thank you for always attending court for your CASA child! You are doing great.
- **Yessenia Mendoza** - Thank you for spending two whole days in court for your case.
- **Carey Redmond** - Congratulations for seeing your case to adoption! It has been a long hard almost three years, but these children are in their forever home!! Your dedication is apparent!!
- **Amber Voisin** - Congratulations on taking on your 2nd case and attending court for that case. Your dedication and love for the children is appreciated.
- **Danielle Walker** - Thank you for always attending the hearings for your CASA child. You are amazing!

**Kathy Mella, Tim Hitt and Yvonne White** - Thank you for coming in to complete your quarterly case staffing!

## JANUARY DONATIONS & GRANTS

Tori Rayne  
Marty Majewski  
Anonymous  
Gerria & David Couvillion  
Artistic Embroidery (In-Kind)  
CASA-AP  
Jock Scott Community Partnership Grant

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## MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Nicholas Foster	3/3
Carey Redmond	3/6
Molly Arrington	3/18
Cindy Courville	3/18
Buddy McNabb	3/23
Kristy Ledford	3/27
Priscilla Callais	3/28

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## MARCH ANNIVERSARY

### 1 Year

Karey Kinnard  
Celena Snons

### 2 Years

Molly Arrington  
Elaine Beyer  
Kathryn Mella  
Vickie Naquin

### 3 Years

Alyssia Hay

### 10 Years

Jon Russo

### 12 Years

Yvonne White



## Stay Tuned for more information on our NEW program:



CASA's Krewe is a new volunteer opportunity at CASA of Terrebonne. This ambassador program is meant to help support the mission of CASA of Terrebonne in many ways outside the traditional volunteer advocate role. CASA's Krewe is a network of individuals and businesses that assist our program in promoting the quality, sustainability and growth of CASA of Terrebonne by creating awareness, pursuing program investment partners, and serving as outreach support for CASA of Terrebonne.

The new CASA's Krewe program provides its members the flexibility and opportunity to share their energy and talents at their own pace; so they can make a difference in our community.

More information and sign-up opportunity will be included in our next newsletter.

## Finding a Forever Home



Congratulations to **Kristy Ledford** and **Leah Viosin** who have been on this case since 2019 and celebrating the adoption of the third and last child on the case on a day full of love! We could not thank you enough for all the hard work you two have put in on this case!



After 1068 days, it's adoption day for **Carey Redmond's** CASA children. Carey has been on this case since July 2020 and we are so happy she was there to witness the children becoming part of their forever family!

