

# MID-YEAR UPDATE

JUNE 2023



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**64**  
**CHILDREN**  
**SERVED IN**  
**2023**



**36**  
**ADVOCATES**  
**SERVED**  
**CHILDREN**



**1 NEW**  
**STRATEGIC**  
**PLAN**  
**DEVELOPED**



**25 +**  
**CHILDREN**  
**NEED AN**  
**ADVOCATE**

**LEARN MORE:**  
**GORGEASA.ORG**

## CASA WELCOMES LARGEST COHORT OF VOLUNTEERS IN 2 YEARS!

Columbia Gorge CASA welcomed 8 new advocates at a swearing-in ceremony led by Judge John Wolf on April 18th. These volunteer advocates include: Jeannie Chance, Christine Crandall, Glenna Gibson, Amber Johnson, Theo Parkinson, Terra Veazey, Baily Waldron, and Mary Zenorini.

As advocates, these volunteers will have the responsibility of advocating for the best interest of children that are involved in the court system due to having experienced abuse and neglect.

“Every day we hear negative news about shootings, climate change, homelessness, and the list goes on. I can’t do much about those big problems, but I can do something about a part of society that we don’t always hear about: abused and neglected children,” expressed Zenorini.

Before being sworn in, each of these new volunteers completed an extensive screening process and 38 hours of training. Throughout the training process, they learned about child welfare best practices, recognizing one’s own biases, court report writing, and how to build trust with the child for which they will eventually advocate.

“The training was excellent with a good combination of classroom learning, online videos and articles, and impressive personal speakers,” stated Zenorini. “My eyes were really opened up to some of the tragedies taking place in our country today that no one talks about.”

Despite this increase of volunteers, Columbia Gorge CASA currently has a waitlist of over 25 children in need of an advocate. Additional advocates help to ensure that the voices of our community’s most vulnerable children are heard in court.

**JOIN OUR TEAM OF ADVOCATES: [GORGEASA.ORG](http://GORGEASA.ORG)**

# WAYS TO GIVE TO CASA



## WHY YOUR DONATION MATTERS

The advocacy provided by CASA helps ensure that every child experiencing foster care in Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman counties has the opportunity to transition successfully into adulthood. Research shows that when a CASA volunteer is appointed, outcomes are strengthened for children and families, more needed services are ordered, children are significantly less likely to reenter the child welfare system, children perform better academically and behaviorally, and have higher levels of hope.

It is also the goal of CASA to provide the children that we advocate for with a consistent adult presence in their life during their time in care. Harvard University reports, "The single most common factor for children who develop resilience is at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult." The advocacy that CASA provides helps to ensure a brighter future for the children of our region.

**GIVE TO CASA'S MISSION: [GORGEKASA.ORG](http://GORGEKASA.ORG)**



## CASA PLAYHOUSE RAFFLE

Presented by Copper West Real Estate & Mid-Columbia Health Foundation

Columbia Gorge CASA is raffling off a one-of-a-kind playhouse (valued at \$6,500) to one lucky person! Proceeds from tickets purchased will go towards supporting CASA's advocacy for abused and neglected children in Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman Counties! This one-of-a-kind playhouse will be a beautiful addition to your yard and will provide countless memories for your children or grandchildren. Don't need a playhouse? Buy a "Foster Family Ticket!" If a "Foster Family Ticket" is picked as the winner, the Playhouse will be donated to a local foster family. The winner will be announced on July 14th!

**TICKETS AVAILABLE: [GORGEKASA.ORG](http://GORGEKASA.ORG)**



## ADVOCATE SPOTLIGHT: SUSAN POOR

Susan Poor joined CASA in March of 2017. Since then, she has taken three cases, one of which she is still currently diligently working. Susan truly goes above and beyond in her advocacy, traveling hours to see her two CASA children in separate placements. Even in the midst of a complicated and often difficult case, Susan never falters in being there for the children she serves.

Susan says she became a CASA because she "wanted to help kids within the foster care system feel that someone does care about them and is there to walk beside them, behind them, or in front of them when needed." She adds, "Foster care children need to depend on someone, and that someone needs to show up to the plate and do the best job they can do."

Susan's favorite part of advocacy is the children, followed by her love of learning, of which there is plenty to do in child welfare. Susan has thrown herself into gaining a better understanding of the child welfare system, from Oregon law to ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act), child development, trauma responses, and human resources. She also acknowledges how important it is to meet new people and learn from them, as well.



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