



**CASA**

Court Appointed Special Advocates  
**FOR CHILDREN**

**PIEDMONT CASA**

# PIEDMONT CASA Annual Report

## 2009–2010

### CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



At fifteen, Piedmont CASA has a new, permanent home — a handsome white brick three story building at 818 East High Street. It is within easy walking distance of the courthouse and has ample parking accessed from 9 1/2 Street for volunteers and staff. This beautifully remodeled 1891 structure was purchased August 2, 2010! There is space for the training of CASA volunteers, for meetings of the Board and Friends of CASA Committee, and for staff offices. Large windows provide great light, the first floor ceilings are high, and there is an open, happy feel about the space which makes a big difference for staff and volunteers who are dealing daily with dark issues and ceilings that seem anything but high.

The gas lanterns on either side of CASA's prominent front door can be seen from the courthouse. They remind us of the light CASA volunteers bring to the lives of abused and neglected children, children whose future will be decided by a court of law. Every court proceeding is enhanced by the selfless dedication of the men and women who volunteer

*continued on pg. 2*

## Trusting Advocacy

*The first time they went to the grocery store, he asked his foster father to buy him three cans of chicken noodle soup. His foster father told him that he would have a home-cooked meal every night and they didn't need the soup. The boy quietly insisted, holding the cans firmly to his chest.*

When this case came to Piedmont CASA, the boy had been removed from his mother's care due to his stepfather's ongoing physical abuse and his mother's alcohol abuse. The boy's father took custody, but he, too, was struggling; he had a new, pregnant wife, no income and a history of drug abuse. The boy moved from place to place, living with his mother, his father, grandparents and step-grandparents. The constants in his life were hunger and transiency.

When assigned to the boy, the CASA volunteer began to get to know him and each of his family members. He was determined to interview every person involved in the case and to read every document pertinent to the boy. He met with parents, step-parents, extended family, doctors and teachers from multiple schools. He was diligent and steady in his investigation. He was able to build relationships based on honesty and trust with all parties because he was unfailingly focused on the boy and clear in his focus with the parents.

*When they got home and unloaded the groceries, the boy put the cans on the counter. He placed them carefully, pyramid-style, where he could reach them and see them, reassuring himself that food was within his grasp. The foster father suggested that they put the cans in the pantry with the other canned goods. The boy quietly insisted, holding the cans firmly in his sight.*

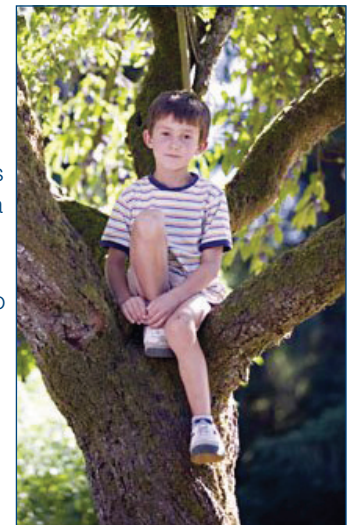
The CASA volunteer's efforts were far-reaching. He tracked down the boy when no one else could as the boy's father moved them from place to place — knowing the boy loved school the CASA volunteer called to see if the boy's records had transferred to a new school; they had, and the boy was located. The CASA worker advocated for therapy that would help the boy

cope with feelings of abandonment and anger. He made sure the boy was attending school and he tracked behavior changes as they occurred in that setting. He participated in team meetings and planning sessions — even as other case-participants changed, the CASA worker was there, becoming a constant in the boy's life.

In the past two and a half years, the boy has lived in seven different placements, he has been homeless and he has been hospitalized.

He has had five different social workers and has attended five different schools. He has had one CASA volunteer.

The Department of Social Services stepped in and took custody of the boy because neither parent could provide for him or keep him safe. The boy was placed with his aunt and things were fine for a while. But then the aunt began complaining — the boy was acting out, the father was violent during visits, and she couldn't handle the situation any longer. The CASA volunteer was focused on the child, noting that visits with the mom preceded periods of anger and outbursts by the boy. He met with the therapist and social worker, and he continued reading voluminous school records, medical records and psychological reports. He also continued to visit the boy regularly, maintaining his role as a constant in the boy's life.



*continued on pg. 3*

and give their time, talents, and energy to gathering and presenting information about the child or children to the court. As one of our judges has said, "By the time a case comes to court for a hearing, no one in the room knows that child as well as the CASA."

Piedmont CASA's mission is narrow and focused. I believe that is one of the key reasons this program is able to do such good work. All of the energies of Ruth Stone, President, and her six terrific colleagues are concentrated on recruiting, training, and supporting the citizen volunteers who advocate for children. Every volunteer has a supervisor with him or her each step of the way. Your financial and moral support makes all this possible.

Ruth often talks about the "two Charlottesville's." Many of us experience this community as a blessing in so many ways, ways that make us grateful to live and work here. As wonderful as this community is, though, there are problems all around us. Far too many families experience the "other" Charlottesville where they are under great stress, coping with economic devastation, including loss of jobs and homes. Piedmont CASA serves children from both Charlottesville's. The children and their families come from all economic, racial, and cultural strata; after all, child abusers are not delineated by their gender, race, ethnicity, or economic status. We serve children from birth to age 18. Last year, just over half were children of color and the rest of the children were white. Approximately half were girls and half were boys. Family risk factors included substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health issues, housing instability, and economic issues. In more than ten percent of the families, at least one parent was incarcerated and in just under ten percent one or both parents faced language barriers.

*continued on pg. 3*



## Piedmont CASA: Serving Children for 15 Years

On September 15 Piedmont CASA celebrated its 15th Anniversary and saluted all Piedmont CASA volunteers. It was a beautiful evening as Piedmont CASA honored those who have been most instrumental in achieving the mission to make sure abused and neglected children have voices in court and the opportunity to live in safe, permanent and nurturing homes. Since inception, Piedmont CASA has trained 500 volunteers who have served more than 1,100 children.

I am always inspired by those who are ready to offer themselves – their time, their skill, their hearts – to protect a child from further harm. CASA volunteers do not sit in offices – they are out in the field, visiting children, meeting parents, talking with teachers, consulting with doctors, learning from



**Mary Nafpaktitis, 4-Year Volunteer**



**Piedmont CASA Celebration**

therapists and reporting to the court. Piedmont CASA works to create a place where everyone thinks of the child first, where children's best interests are paramount, where the energies of staff and volunteers push each case, each family and the system to a better place. Last year our volunteers contributed over 11,000 hours of their time working on behalf of our children.

This year, we have already seen a 40% increase in court referrals, though it is too soon to determine if this is a trend. Allegations of physical abuse are up 37%, and sexual abuse up 43%. We are being asked

to expand our services beyond Charlottesville and Albemarle County. And, we are seeing newspaper headlines recommending cuts in funds for foster care and mental health services for children. More than ever, CASA volunteers will be called on to help make sure our children are fully served and heard by the court and welfare systems.

I used to say that I wished that Piedmont CASA could be put out of business, and I do wish child abuse and neglect were not real. But, they are real. Because I know that there will always be children who need protection, need a voice, need someone who believes in them, I am grateful that Piedmont CASA is here.



**Piedmont CASA's new home**

Over the past fifteen years Piedmont CASA has grown and continued to respond to the needs of our community's abused and neglected children. Our staff, our volunteer base, and even our working space have all grown in order to better meet the need. Our investment in a permanent home is a promise to the community and the children we serve: as long as there is a need, Piedmont CASA will be here to speak up for children. We are able to take action and advocate for all local abused and neglected children because of you – our volunteers, our donors, our community partners – who help Piedmont CASA make that promise a reality. ■

*-Ruth L. Stone, President*

*Photos courtesy of I. henry.photography*

All of the children in both Charlottesville's need and deserve safe, loving, and permanent homes.

Last year Piedmont CASA served 219 children, an almost five percent increase from the year prior. In the first quarter of this year the court referred to us a record number of cases, and that number continues to grow. As the number of children we serve rises, we must continue to meet their needs. After all, no other program provides volunteer court advocacy services to them. We do not know if the rising number of referrals is a trend or a brief uptick. What we do know is that we must continue to serve these children, matching them with the volunteers who can best work with them. We continue to recruit actively, and at the end of November we inducted 21 new CASA volunteers.

I've always believed that "it's all about people." CASA is extraordinarily fortunate to have had Ruth Stone at its helm for fifteen years. The board marked this milestone at its November meeting with great appreciation for her dedicated service and leadership – past, present, and future. It has been a personal and professional pleasure for me to work with Ruth and her colleagues as a member of the board for the past six years. Dan Nagin has been a tremendous help to me during my tenure as Chairman, and I am delighted that he will become Piedmont CASA's Chairman in January 2011. With a strong and active board, generous donors, and a permanent home the volunteers and staff will be able to continue to do their very important work of speaking up for the children in our community who most need a voice.

Paula F. Newcomb, *Chairman*

#### **Trusting Advocacy** *continued from pg. 1*

When the boy's situation deteriorated again, his father called the CASA volunteer. The father knew his child would not be returned to live with him, and he also knew that the CASA worker had been there for the boy throughout the court's involvement in their lives. He trusted the CASA volunteer, believing that he would be able to help the boy. The boy's behavior had become erratic again. His mother continued to encourage him to act out with the hope that he would have to come live with her, and his father could not secure work or maintain a home. No one in his family could keep him safe, and the boy remained hungry, needing nourishment of his body and of his heart. The boy's social worker was looking for a new placement for the boy. The CASA worker, understanding the boy's need to remain connected to family and perceiving a possibility no one else had yet identified, suggested placement with the family who planned to adopt the boy's half-brother, a baby who had been removed from his dad and step-mother. The family opened their home and their hearts to the boy.

*Last week the boy went to the grocery store with his foster father. They bought salad greens, a chicken, plenty of milk and sandwich fixings for school. When they got home, the boy helped to unload the groceries, putting everything carefully in its proper place. When they finished, the boy walked over to the counter and picked up the three cans of soup that had been sitting there pyramid-style for months. He walked over to his foster father and said he was ready to put the cans in the pantry. The boy quietly smiled as the father held him firmly to his chest.*

Things will always be complicated for this boy: his mother cannot put his needs first and will always manipulate him to her ends; dad will struggle to remain sober and to get work; and the boy will act out as he continues to try to reconcile the years he spent hungry, hurt and without a true home. His future, however, is much brighter than his past, and his CASA volunteer has played an essential role in that process.

Recently the boy wrote a note to his CASA volunteer. The envelope was addressed to the CASA volunteer and under his name it read "The best casa worker EVER." A CASA volunteer is not a mentor or a friend or a parent-figure. A CASA volunteer is a child's voice in court and an advocate who must focus on the child's best interests with an ultimate goal of making sure the child has a safe, permanent and nurturing home. ■

### *the life of an abused or neglected child?*

*How can you help change*



*Become a Volunteer Advocate.*

**Spring Training Starts in March 2011!**

Contact Piedmont CASA by phone at (434) 971-7515, or email [pcasa@embarqmail.com](mailto:pcasa@embarqmail.com), or go to [www.pcasa.org](http://www.pcasa.org).

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July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010

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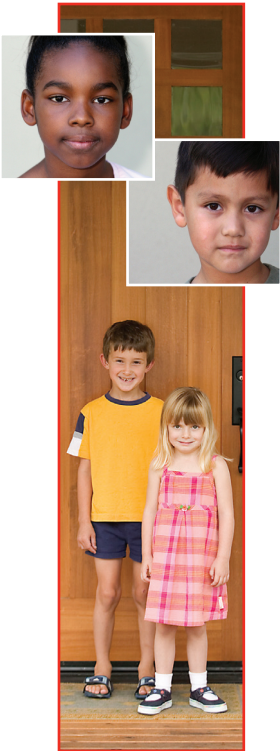
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 Kimberly Emery  
 By Bob and Ethel Garrity  
 Ruth Geils  
 By Melba Atkinson  
 Nancy Grable  
 By Anonymous  
 Dave and Carol Hogg  
 By Carolyn L. Rader  
 Georgina King  
 By Mr. and Mrs. Edward D. Tayloe II  
 Barba Merriwether  
 By Timmie Jones  
 Daisy Moga  
 By Louisa C. Barrett  
 By Bonnie and Dick Brewer  
 Dougie Morris  
 By Janet G. Weary  
 Paula Newcomb  
 By Jim and Sue Haden  
 By Richard and Elizabeth Merrill  
 By Shirley and Saunders Midyette  
 Randolph and Whit Parrish  
 By Mr. and Mrs. Edward R. Parrish  
 Bernice B. Rea  
 By Charlotte L. Rea  
 Mildred Robinson  
 By Dr. and Mrs. Kevin R.  
 McConnell  
 Anne and James Rucker  
 By Ms. Marcia A. Dickinson and  
 Mr. Albert L. Simmons  
 Julie Stamm  
 By Leigh Middleditch  
 Ruth Stone  
 By Mr. and Mrs. Victor M.  
 Dandridge, Jr.  
 By Anne Stone

Dr. and Mrs. Bill Williams  
 By Sandra and Jay Levine

*We thank our many supporters for their generous gifts to Piedmont CASA. If an error or omission has occurred, we express our sincere regret and ask that it be brought to our attention.*

*If you would like copies of Piedmont CASA's financial statements, please call the office at (434) 971-7515.*

*\*In-kind gifts*

**Piedmont CASA  
 Board of Directors**

Paula F. Newcomb, *Chairman*  
 Dan Nagin, *Vice-Chairman*  
 Ranjit Ahluwalia  
 Martha Ballenger  
 Steve Bowers  
 Angela M. Davis  
 Dana Harris  
 Katy Kreienbaum  
 Janet Legro  
 David Moga  
 Aillinn Ogden  
 Phil Stinnie  
 Ella Strubel  
 Jennifer Winslow

**Emeritus Board  
 of Directors**

Carolyn Achenbach  
 Stephanie Commander  
 Sarah Dandridge  
 Kimberly Emery  
 Tracey Hopper  
 Carol B. Hurt  
 Diane Long  
 Kathy Parker  
 Julie Stamm  
 Edward M. Wayland

**Piedmont CASA Staff**

**President**  
 Ruth L. Stone

**CASA Supervisors**  
 Lindsey Henry  
 Annie Izard  
 Becky Mooney  
 Hope Payne

**Advancement Director**  
 Rachel S. Lloyd Miller

**Office Administrator**  
 Janet Williams

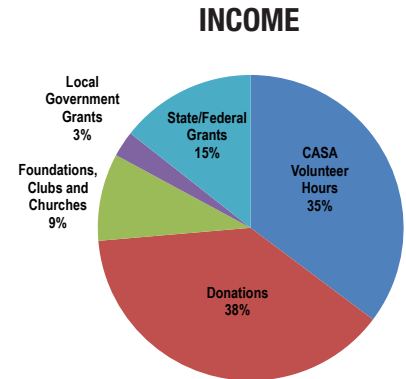
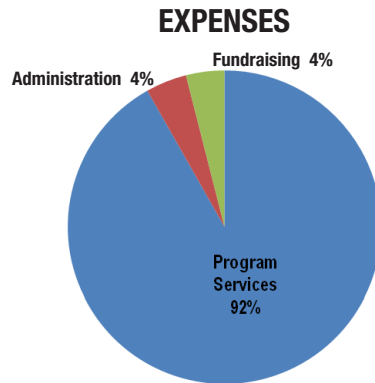
# Financial Summary: July 1, 2009–June 30, 2010

## Expenses:

Program Services	\$521,960.00
Administration	\$ 24,030.00
Fundraising	\$ 22,517.00
	<b>\$568,507.00</b>

## Income:

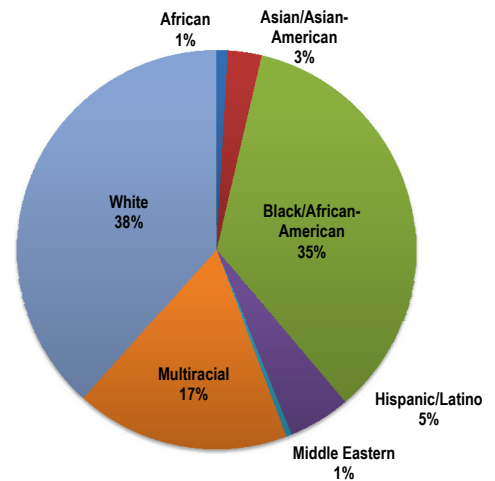
CASA Volunteer Hours	\$230,162.00
Donations	\$250,824.00
Foundations, Clubs & Churches	\$ 60,270.00
Local Government Grants	\$ 17,761.00
State/Federal Grants	\$ 94,107.00
	<b>\$653,124.00</b>



## The Children We Serve

Last year the court referred 219 children to the program, a 5% increase over the year prior.

Of the 219 children ages birth to 18, 105 were girls and 114 were boys. Two children were African; 77 Black/African American; six were Asian/Asian American; 11 Hispanic/Latino; one Middle Eastern; 38 multi-racial; and 84 White.



## CASA Makes a Difference

One of the ways Piedmont CASA measures success is by tracking the well-being (physical, mental, emotional and academic) of the children whose cases we close during the year.

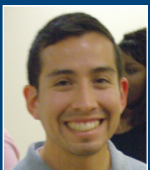
We closed cases for 85 children during Fiscal Year 2009-10, and of those children:

- 90% of the children were living in their own home, adoptive home or relative placement within 18 months of court intervention;
- 100% of children with health needs received beneficial care;
- 96% of children with mental health concerns showed improvement in emotional well-being and/or received appropriate therapeutic services; and
- 98% of school age children with educational concerns demonstrated grade-level academic performance or received remedial services.

Most importantly, CASA volunteers stood by these children to make sure their voices were heard and their needs were met.

***CASA Volunteers: Everyday Heroes Making Lifelong Differences for Children***

# Piedmont CASA Honors Its Volunteer Advocates 2009-2010



## 10 - 15 years

Dee Berkeley  
Lucretia Blythe  
Ruth Geils  
Catherine Mancuso  
Susan Roberts

## 6 - 10 years

Liz Blankenship  
Doug Brown  
Evette Carto-Barton  
Steve Cooper  
Virginia Daugherty  
Nancy Grable  
Georgina King  
Dougie Morris  
Terry Petty  
Joe Ronan  
Lindsey Schwab  
Al Stone  
Patty Thomas-Cato  
Scott Walk

## 3 - 5 years

Delores Alt  
Jim Burns  
Mike Callison  
Vikki Callison  
Brooke Dezio  
Kathryn Dillon  
Peg Donnelly  
Susan Edwards  
Phil Giaramita  
Simon Harvey  
Dena Lawton  
Pat Macionis  
Janna Mahaffey  
Anne McDaniel  
Alicia Milligan  
Rebecca Mooney

Mary Nafpaktitis  
Cynthia Neff  
Ann Pax  
Eric Sartain  
Linda Shaw  
Jean Shepherd  
Erin Spencer  
Ellie Stadelmaier  
Jim Stadelmaier

## Less than 3 years

Pat Adler  
Andrenne Alsum  
Janet Alving  
Stacey Ashworth  
Amalia Belcher  
Billy Benson  
Heather Boe  
Jan Bonner  
Kakie Brooks  
Betty Brown  
Susan Burke  
Ruthann Carr  
Ruth Carroll  
Wei-Bing Chen  
Barbara Colberg  
Steve Cooley  
Lynette Cuff  
Adrienne Dent  
Bernadette Donovan  
Nicholas Dumais  
Anne Fitzgerald  
John Flentje  
Allison Forman  
Pat Frye  
Alice Gore  
Charles Gross  
Robert Hacking  
Erin Hall  
Mary Kathryn Hassett

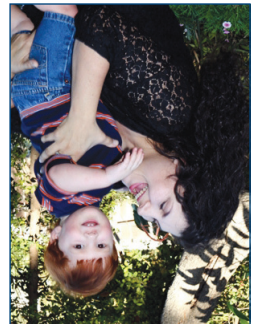
Bonita Hill  
Erin Houlihan  
Kathryn Hunter  
Barbara Hutchinson  
Susan Jacobson  
Sharla Klingel  
Jeff Langston  
Benjamin Lee  
Monica Markelz  
Ginger McKee  
Matthew Medina  
Jim Mehlin  
Lauren Merkle  
Anne Christine Miaral-Yost  
Carla Myrtle  
Kati Naess  
Peggy Nicholson  
JoAnn Osborne  
Rachel Paul  
Brooke Pettit  
Rebecca Riddle-Whitlow  
Lilli Ross  
Mark Sackson  
Geri Schirmer  
Dick Schneider  
Caitlin Schwab  
Paul Seehaver  
Janet Shobe  
Harriet Slezak  
Meri Jane Smith  
Betsey Soulsby  
Janet Stack  
Desiree Toliver  
Molly Tran  
Lori Woolworth  
Carrie Anne Worrell  
Ruth Worrell  
Kathy Yarmey  
Jean Zearley

Photos courtesy of *L.henry.photography*

# Volunteer Activity Highlights 2009-10:



- Piedmont CASA trained **25 new CASA volunteers**;
- Advocates were assigned to **76 new children**;
- Cases were **successfully closed for 85 children**; of the closed cases, advocates were assigned to their children an average of 20 months;
- **129 independent investigations** were conducted;
- CASA volunteers and CASA staff **attended 290 hearings**;
- **9,708 contacts** were made by CASA volunteers with children, parents, physicians, therapists, social workers, attorneys and others;
- **896 monthly monitoring reports** were submitted by CASA volunteers;
- Volunteers with Piedmont CASA contributed **11,211 hours in services** working on behalf of child abuse victims;
- **2 children remained on Piedmont CASA's waiting list** at the end of the year;
- CASA volunteers who retired during Fiscal Year 2009-10 **served in the program an average of 27 months**.



2009-2010

## Annual Report

www.pcasa.org

434.971.7515

Charlottesville, VA 22902

P.O. Box 603

PIEDMONT CASA

CASA

COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES

FOR CHILDREN



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