



**GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY 13TH
CIRCUIT COURT: FAMILY
DIVISION & PROBATE COURT
VOLUNTEERS**

March/ April 2020 Newsletter
Volume 49, Issue 2

Donate Your Time To Someone In Need

*Robert P Griffin Hall of Justice
280 Washington St., STE. B150
Traverse City, Mi 49684*

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Court Appointed Special Advocates
- Transporters
- Guardians/ Conservators
- Minor/ Adult Guardianship Reviews
- Learning Partners
- Program Assistants

No experience Needed
Next Training Opportunity:
CASA Training Begins
April 13th, 2020
Call 231-922-4827 to learn
more and to schedule a
pre-training interview!

- All volunteers must pass standard background checks prior to training
- Fingerprints may be required
- Volunteering may require working with high risk individuals

Learning Partners Meetings:

Tuesday, March 3rd, 4-5pm

Tuesday, April 7th 4-5pm

Learning 
 Partners

Grand Traverse County
Probate & Family Court
Volunteer Services

Learning Partners On Ice!

Learning Partners celebrated President's Day on the ice at Howe Arena. Many thanks to our host, Centre Ice, for providing fun on the ice for 12 of us, which we followed with a pizza lunch. Students, siblings, parents and Learning Partner Volunteers skated and mingled for a fun break from school. Thank you to Volunteers Carla Bloom, Ali Clark, Ana Zubaryeva, and Allie Shumate for your help in keeping things gliding along!

We are looking forward to our next adventure -- Swim and Water Safety Lessons in May.



January's CASA Meeting: Relationship Building and Communication

The January CASA meeting focused on how volunteers are able to build relationships with both the children and adults on their cases. Veteran CASA input helped us to compare the "Interview With a Child" video from training with what one might actually experience when they first meet the children on their case. Although training videos are scripted and seem unrealistic, it was decided that the transparency and examples of questions in the video were a great representation of how to introduce yourself to a case.

Key Points from the meeting: As a CASA, consistency is your greatest tool! Making regular and scheduled visits with the children will help to build trust over time. Be patient, and don't expect the children to immediately open up to you. Look at yourself as being an ally to everyone on the case, and be ready to "pick your battles" when circumstances seem to be against the odds!

February's CASA Meeting: Case Discussion

Due to inclement weather, our plan to discuss termination trials was put on hold for the time being. We will plan on rescheduling this meeting for a future date, so keep an eye out for that! Thank you to all who braved the snow to attend— It was a great opportunity for Q&A time between those with cases and those who have taken cases in the past.



Reminders & Announcements

- Have you completed your 2020 Central Registry Background Check? Please contact the office to schedule a time to come in and finish that paperwork if you have not been able to do so already. Don't forget your drivers license!
- CASA Training is coming up again! Sessions will run on Mondays and Wednesdays from 4-7:30pm beginning on April 13th. Are you interested in attending a session for a refresher? Meghan invites those who have not experienced the new CASA training curriculum to drop in for a session or two (or more!) This is a great opportunity for fulfilling your 12 required continuing education hours for the year.
- Swearing in for CASAs is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 7th at 4pm in Judge Stanton's Courtroom. Save the date and join us for the ceremony and cake afterwards.
- Do you have a friend that you feel would be a great volunteer? We would love to hear from them and get them signed up for training! We can still accept a few more to join us for CASA Training in April.
- The March CASA Meeting will consist of Michigan/ National CASA policy updates and paperwork, and review report writing standards. **If you intend to take a CASA case this year, or currently are assigned to a case, you are highly encouraged to attend. Meghan will contact you to meet one-on-one if you cannot make it to this meeting.**



March

Mike Kanitz
Wanda Anstine
Heide McNichols
Darcy Schlitt
Stephen Drosdeck
Beverly Saur
Lori St. Germain
Mary Morrison-Collins

April

Art Nickerson
Carolyn Klender
Kathy Blunk
John Wierenga
Maureen Butler
Sue Nanasi
Matt Torres
Lisa Niergarth



GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT
MELANIE D. STANTON, PROBATE & FAMILY COURT JUDGE
280 Washington St., Suite B 150, Traverse City, MI 49684
231-922-4827

Or Current Resident

Learning Partners

Tuesday, March 3rd 4-5pm

Tuesday, April 7th, 4-5pm



CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate)

Tuesday, March 17, 3-5pm

NO APRIL MEETING:

CASA Training replaces meeting



Jennifer Weber, Program Manager
922-4828, jweber@grandtraverse.org
Meghan Schuur, Volunteer Coordinator
922-4597, mschuur@grandtraverse.org
Laura Shumate, Learning Partners
922-4419, lshumate@grandtraverse.org
Kathy Nixon, Office Specialist
922-4827, knixon@grandtraverse.org

*All meetings are held at the Volunteer Services office unless
otherwise mentioned.