

# VIP

**VOLUNTEERS IN  
PREVENTION/PROBATION**  
GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY PROBATE COURT

January-February 2012  
Volume 40, Issue 1



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## 2011 in Pictures Thanks for a great year!



New Vision Youth make apple pies courtesy of the Grand Traverse Pie Company.



Diana Zapalski teaches New Vision youth how to make rugs using sheets.



CASA training class 2011 with Judge Stowe



Judge Stowe welcomes New volunteers

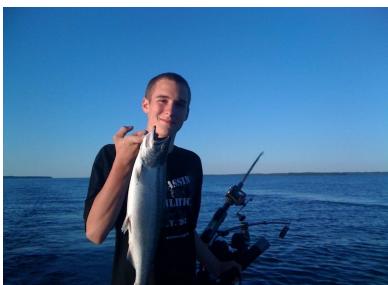
2011 Truancy class committee  
Left to right Sharon Studinger,  
Sharon Rosema  
Barbara Disborough, Sharon  
Herron. Standing left to right Roy  
Bernier, Mike Herron.



left Barb Winburne and Carla Lamphere discuss guardianship cases



Transporters Barbara and Al Wilkins.



2011 "Get Hooked" Youth fishing program.



Learning Partners Hike and Picnic summer 2011 and Learning Partners fishing outing 2011



# Happy Birthday

## January

Florence Morrison  
Holli Ringgenberg  
Daniel Briggs  
Henry TenBrink  
Joann Carlson  
Colette Riffenburg  
Pat Wazny

Alfred Wilkins  
Caroline Hirth  
Mary Myers  
Maswe Hennirick  
Caron Alpers  
Ron Chrivia



## February

Cathy Sevensma  
Betty Dunham  
Nancy Fraser  
Kay Velker  
Lynn Troutman  
John Roeser  
Ranya Prince-Stolz  
Sophia DeLonghi  
Beth Rideout  
Sue Green

Nancy Ferrar  
Betty Leden  
Valerie Doman  
Donna Thoma  
Cheryl Hains  
Marie Hanis  
Sue Summers  
Joan Wigton  
Lynn Bryant  
Susan Olson

Dear Volunteers:

It is with sadness that I must retire from employment with Grand Traverse County and Volunteer Services

I will always treasure the friends that I have made here at Volunteer Services.

My last day was December 29, 2011.



Happy Trails!

*Judy*

### Have you noticed our new sign?

Thanks to Carol Stocking and Greg Brainard for our new sign in the lower level lobby directing District court visitors.

This new free standing sign, directs District Court clients to the entrance door at the end of the hall instead of our Volunteer Services dept. window.

## THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

We were saddened to hear of the passing of our friend Marian Sage. A retired teacher, Marian was a faithful Learning Partner tutor-mentor for many years. We will remember her for her commitment to children and for her kindness, which touched so many.

We were happy to hear that Linda Harker, from Family Court Records is successfully recovering at home from a recent illness

### Good news from The Probate Office

After undergoing heart surgery at Mayo Clinic Melissa Cholger from the Probate Office is recuperating at home.

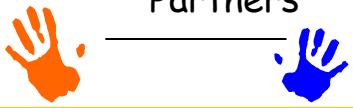
We are happy to have former probate register Kathi Polk filling in for Melissa.

### Thank you

Many thanks to Donna Gonder, Alinka Lipchinski and Child & Family Services for the great Holiday treats.



## Learning Partners



We are fortunate to be invited to attend two performances in December a few of the older students enjoyed "The Nutcracker" ballet at Interlochen Arts Academy and a half dozen others saw the "Annie, Jr." children's production at the Old Town Playhouse.

Each performance was an inspiring holiday treat for our students. Several have mentioned an interest in the orchestra costumes, dancing and acting since their visit. For many this was the first time they ever had the opportunity to see a performance especially one with other students!

**HELPLINK**-a problem solving program will be the subject of our January 17 meeting. See column across.

We continue to get requests and continue to add volunteers to our Learning Partners every week!

Judine Leavitt, professional tutor and volunteer learning partner will present tutoring tips and techniques at our February Learning Partners meeting Tuesday February 7 4:00-6:00.



Learning Partners enjoy The Nutcracker ballet at Interlochen in December 2011

Learning Partners Attended the OldTown Playhouse

On November 11 & 12, 2011, Diana Zapalski Robin Komrska and Linda Fawcett attended the Michigan CASA meeting in Lansing. Jeanne Fowler author of "Peter's Lullaby" was a keynote speaker. Ms. Fowler, founder of Big Family of Michigan, is herself a victim of child abuse. She talked about her childhood and the importance of **R&R** encouraging people to **Recognize and Report** any abuse to police or



**CASA**  
Court Appointed Special Advocates  
FOR CHILDREN

MICHIGAN CASA, INC.

Dept. of Human Services immediately stating child abuse can happen anywhere, and at any time.

A copy of her story of survival "Peter's Lullaby"

has been added to our Volunteer Services library.

On **Tuesday, January 17, 4:00 pm**, Barb Lemcool will discuss **HELPLINK** in a combined meeting for CASA and Learning Partner volunteers. Learning Partners will meet separately after the **HELPLINK** presentation, CASA volunteers will discuss current cases.



On **Tuesday, February 21, 2012** Crystal Thomas Coordinator of the Safe Haven program at Child and Family Services will be our guest. She will discuss this program designed to accommodate child & parent visitation. Several of our CASA assignments have had involvement with Safe Haven and Crystal will be able to discuss some current case specifics. We hope you can join us.



## MICHIGAN ADOPTION DAY

Michigan Adoption Day held Tuesday November 22, 2011 was a huge success with 17 children achieving finalization and permanency through adoption. A luncheon was held after court proceedings to celebrate and honor the new parents and their children.

Special thanks to CASA volunteers Susan Kraus, Diana Zapalski, Lynn Troutman and Nancy Winogrodzki who helped greet and direct families in the Hall of Justice and the court room on this very busy day!



Also recognized during the Adoption Day celebration were Don & Cindy Prince, Foster Care parents with Child & Family Services. They were awarded Foster Care Family of the Year by the State Foster Care Review Board. The Princes were nominated by Diana Zapalski, local review Board member who got to know them through her role as a CASA volunteer.

### New CASA training Planned

A new training for CASA volunteers is being scheduled to begin in March 2012. The 30+hour curriculum includes topics such as the law, understanding families, substance abuse, domestic violence, communication and other important components needed to understand and work with neglect & abuse cases. Grand Traverse County is extremely lucky to have a CASA training team, made up of local presenters who customize this national curriculum, to fit our community. For more information please call us at 231-922-4827.

### Refresh/reminders going into the new year

- Mail box- an “after hours drive through” mail box is available to drop off reports etc.
- Update your address and email and all phone numbers/ contact information. If anything has changed.
- Check the expiration date on your ID card
- Do you get our VIP newsletter every other month? Publication is our way of keeping us in touch with you on meetings and events happening
- Spring is just around the corner. Interested in helping out as a guest facilitator for our summer program New Vision Academy? Many hands needed to make this program a success for our youth.
- Monthly meetings:

Learning Partners- first Tuesday of each month 4:00-5:00pm

CASA –third Tuesday of each month 4:00-6:00 pm

Guardians– meetings to be announced

- Report forms available by email some available online. Ask us which ones.





# GRAND TRAVERSE AREA LITERACY COUNCIL



## Grand Traverse Area Literacy Council Report January, 2012

Happy New Year! We hope you had a happy and meaningful holiday season.

GTALC continues to connect students and tutors and as usual the backgrounds of our students are varied; some are focused on polishing literacy skills and upgrading job skills, others new to English as their primary language are looking to develop proficiency in our language, and others want to complete their GED and/or continue on an educational path.

GTALC was privileged again to be the designated recipient of proceeds from the second annual Children's Book Fair held in November at the City Opera House. Several contacts were made with both publishers and media outlets which may be of service to our students.

The next Tutor Support Workshop will be held on January 14, 2012 at the Traverse Area District Library in the McGuire Room from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. This is a great opportunity to meet with other tutors, share successes, techniques and stories about your learners and to seek answers to questions you may have.

If you wish to become a tutor, the next tutor training session will be held April 27 from 6





GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY PROBATE COURT

GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT  
DAVID L. STOWE, PROBATE & FAMILY COURT JUDGE  
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922-4827

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**LEARNING PARTNERS**

1st Tuesday—4:00—5:00 pm

**Tuesday, January 17**

Meeting with CASA HELPLINK  
Barb Lemcool

**Tuesday, February 7**

Judine Leavitt—Tutor tips



**CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate)**

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday – 4:00 – 6:00 pm

**Tuesday, January 17**

Barb Lemcool HELPLINK

**February 21**

Crystal Thomas, Safe Haven will be our guest. Please see page 3



Court Appointed Special Advocates  
FOR CHILDREN  
MICHIGAN CASA, INC.

**LITERACY COUNCIL**

3<sup>RD</sup> Wednesday – 6:00 pm

Traverse Area District Library



**Wednesday, January, 18**  
**Wednesday, February, 15**

**Volunteer Services Offices will be Closed:**

**Monday January 16, 2012**  
**Martin Luther King Day**



**Monday, February 20, 2012**  
**President's Day**

