

**VAC IN A BOX**



**1ST**  
EDITION

# **VAC FOR DUMMIES**

FOR

# **VAC**

*Limited Edition*

**HOW TO  
FORM A  
WINNING  
VOLUNTEER  
ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE**

**NATIONAL CASA'S  
2010 PROMISING  
PRACTICES  
WINNER**



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WELCOME TO HOLLAND  
by  
Emily Perl Kingsley.

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I am often asked to describe the experience of raising a child with a disability - to try to help people who have not shared that unique experience to understand it, to imagine how it would feel. It's like this.....

When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip - to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans. The Coliseum. The Michelangelo David. The gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome to Holland."

"Holland?!?" you say. "What do you mean Holland?? I signed up for Italy! I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy."

But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease. It's just a different place.

So you must go out and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met.

It's just a different place. It's slower-paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around.... and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills....and Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy... and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say "Yes, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned."

And the pain of that will never, ever, ever, ever go away... because the loss of that dream is a very very significant loss.

But... if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things ... about Holland.



*Dear Friends,*

*Thank you! Thank you for taking your valuable time to attend this workshop. Although we may not know each other personally, we share a common bond; a passion for serving children and a desire to eradicate the cancerous plight of child abuse and neglect. Unfortunately, we share another similarity - a lack of resources that prevents us from serving our volunteers and children in the ways they so deserve. While this workshop is by no means 'the answer', I hope you find this information helpful in your efforts to build program capacity.*

*This will come as no surprise to those of you who know me - I could talk about CASA and value of volunteers forever! I love CASA and I love working with volunteers. Actually, in a recent "Swearing-In" Ceremony for new guardians, our Family Court Judge talked about the spirit of volunteers. Judge Riddle told this group how proud she was of them for "stepping up to the plate to serve children" and that the "only way out of this economic mess is for more people to volunteer". And like Judge Riddle, I believe the greatest potential for positive outcomes for children begins with a powerful CASA volunteer voice.*

*The Volunteer Advisory Council - or VAC as we call it! - is without question, one of the greatest resources within our organization. I am certain the VAC will continue to grow in richness, increase our capacity to serve children, enhance the CASA volunteer experience, and heighten public awareness throughout our community. I wish you great success and if there is ever ANYTHING we can do assist you, just call!*

*Together - we can do great things as we 'celebrate the solution'.*

*Richland County CASA Executive Director,*

*Paige Greene*  
*Paige Greene*



Dear Future VAC,

Today I write to you about our vision of the Volunteer Advisory Council and what I hope the VAC will bring to RCCASA in the future. I know many of you have asked, "How do we develop a VAC for our own organization?" The truth be told you may have already begun the journey and have not yet named the path.

Three years ago, RCCASA identified a strong core of volunteers who attended the same training as RCCASA staff and assisted us in training new volunteers. We were thrilled with the enthusiasm of these volunteers. Our staff was no longer the primary individuals responsible for training our new volunteers. New volunteers had a feeling of "I can do it! I can carry out my role as a GAL because these people have successfully done it!"

Let us not forget how we increased the number of male volunteers. We utilized the several males of this core volunteer group which allowed our organization to go from 13 to 100. Subsequently, these volunteers were not only trainers but recruiters. They not only recruited their co-workers, friends, and families but assisted us in the planning and organizing of recruitment events.

In 2009, we received grant funding for board and organizational development. Several of the core volunteers assisted with the strategic planning and organizational development. RCCASA was able to plan from the perspective of the volunteer. Subsequently, these volunteers realized the need for retention through these planning processes and assisted Richland County CASA with Volunteer Appreciation and the Sadie Hawkins recruitment events not only in time but also in funding.

Members of the core volunteer group expressed interest in mentoring new volunteers. This is a very important component of our program and provides tremendous support to volunteers and CASA Supervisors.

Today, we currently have new members on our VAC as well as members who were part of our core group when we first envisioned this council. These members were recruited for the training they provided to new volunteers as well as the tremendous support they have demonstrated toward our organization. This year we will have 5 new members who are eager to become members of this Council and have exhibited the same type of commitment as our current VAC members.

One person/volunteer/staff cannot do it alone. VAC allows volunteers to spend the hours they can volunteer in an area they enjoy, whether it is recruiting, training, mentoring or event planning. RCCASA considers this Council a valuable asset and these members are given the same opportunities as our staff for professional development to provide the strong advocacy for the children of our community.

The Future of VAC....Quoting one of our volunteers, "it takes a village to raise a child and an entire office to raise a guardian!!" I believe this quote and the hope will be for our VAC to become stronger to support our most valuable asset...OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Thank you for allowing some of the members of the VAC to tell you about the wonderful work they do!

Richland County CASA Program Manager,

**Lela Allen-Haines**

Lela Allen-Haines

# Volunteer Advisory Council

## Richland County CASA

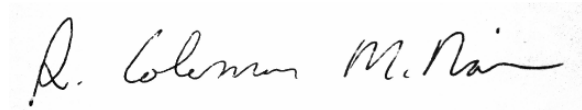
Dear Attendees,

Thank you so much for coming to this training session of Richland County CASA's Volunteer Advisory Council. The VAC was established by CASA leadership to increase input from the volunteer body into the functions of CASA and to provide further support for the organization's employees. Since its creation, the VAC has faced numerous obstacles to making it truly productive. These have included creating a well-defined mission for the group, establishing a membership with ample time to give, and finding a place within the CASA structure. As time passes for this recently formed organization, VAC is finding a core group committed to the furtherance of the VAC and CASA as a whole. The structure of the VAC has also been altered from an initial subcommittee format to the body working in unity on projects undertaken. This provides greater manpower for tasks at hand as well as a heightened sense of unity for the VAC members. VAC is slowly finding its way into the CASA organization, defining more places where it can be of assistance and taken action to be a vital component of the whole. As such, the future of the VAC in Richland County CASA looks bright.

Please remember that this body is a work in progress. The VAC continues to grow and change, both in the faces of its members and the tasks undertaken. While it has found greatest success initially in assisting with the training and mentoring of prospective guardians, VAC seeks to grow its impact into other areas of the organization, such as recruitment and fundraising and other challenges that may face Richland County CASA.

Thank you for coming to this training session. You will learn as much from initial failures of the VAC as from its successes. Most importantly, though, you will hopefully see that the VAC can be a vital part of your CASA organization.

Sincerely,



S. Coleman McNair  
Chairman  
Richland County CASA Volunteer Advisory Council

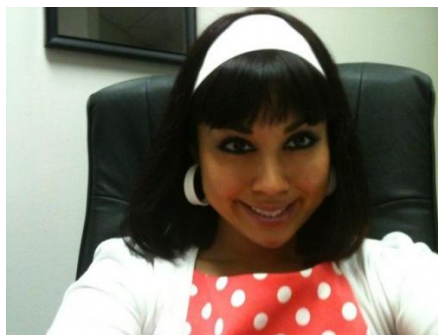
[mcnairsc@sc.rr.com](mailto:mcnairsc@sc.rr.com)

**September 2010: Adrienne Kelish/  
Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)**

**1. Where are you from?** *I grew up in California and then I've lived in Texas and Oregon before moving to South Carolina.*

**2. What were you doing before becoming an AmeriCorps\*VISTA?** *I was working as a sexual assault advocate in Texas. I've got a Bachelors of Science in Criminal Justice and a degree in Baking and Pastry Arts.*

**3. Why did you join AmeriCorps\*VISTA?** *I joined AmeriCorps to give back to my community. I had reached a point in my life where I was willing and able to go somewhere with the sole purpose of helping others. Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) has always been an organization that I have wanted to get involved in.*



**4. What are your duties as a VISTA?** *I do a wide array of different things. I create a number of fliers and brochures and programs for various functions that CASA hosts or participates in. I also work very closely with the training of CASA volunteers.*

**5. What are your goals for your year of service?** *I am the first VISTA at my organization and I would like to pave the way for future VISTA's. I am really enjoying the work that I have done so far and I hope that I helped to contribute to the diversity of this organization.*

**6. What are your plans after your year of service?** *I would like to go back to school for my Masters in Criminal Justice.*

**7. Any special accomplishments?** *I feel very honored to have my work represent CASA to the public. I have thoroughly enjoyed being so accepted as part of their team.*

*Adrienne is currently serving as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA at Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA).*

**This article was taken from a publication published by the United Way of the Midlands.**





## **Dedication to Chief Randy Scott**

### **Chief Randy Scott**

*City of Columbia Police Chief*  
Richland County CASA Volunteer

Chief Randy Scott was the commander of the Richland County Sheriff's Department Uniform Division. Chief Scott was responsible for more than four hundred deputies, and more than thirty units. Chief Scott had been with the Richland County Sheriff's Department for fifteen years having served as Captain of the Community Services Division as well as Captain of Region three.

Before starting his career at the Richland County Sheriff's Department, Chief Scott was enlisted in the United States Marine Corps for six years. Chief Scott holds a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Limestone College and a Master's in Criminal Justice from Troy University. Chief Randy Scott is a 2008 graduate of the 232nd class of the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Leadership Academy.

Chief Randy Scott believes in the motto, "lead by example," and with that, he contributes every ounce of his free time to volunteering at various organizations and serving on several boards. Chief Scott serves as the Chairman of the United Way of the Midlands "Success By Six Council," as well as a member of their Board of Directors. Chief Scott volunteers countless hours with the Boys and Girls Club of the Midlands, as he has just been inducted in their Hall of Fame. Chief Scott and his wife have been strong advocates for abused and neglected children in Richland County by way of the Richland County CASA program. Chief Scott was very instrumental in recording PSAs videos and escorting Honorary CASA Quarterback Judge Hatchett with maximum security to Richland County events. As dedicated community activist, Chief Scott he spends most of his evenings, talking with citizens at local neighborhood meetings.

Chief Scott has been recognized for many accomplishments, through several awards and recognitions. He is the 2010 recipient of the 16th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Drum Major for Justice Award. He has well been recognized as the Commander of the Crime Prevention Program of the year for the State of South Carolina in 2003; the South Carolina Deputy of the Year in 2000 for Crime Prevention Programs for the Community Action Team; became a Certified Crime Prevention Officer for the State of South Carolina in 1996, and a Life Member of the Disabled American Veterans Associations.

Chief Scott has taken his years of experience and his expert knowledge within the field of criminal justice and went into the classroom to enrich the lives of young adults that are interested in what the criminal justice discipline has to offer. Chief Scott uses his real-world experiences to bring clarity and understanding to the concepts that are introduced in the students' written material. Chief Scott brings the balance to the classroom that many students would lack in a traditional class room setting. Chief Scott is embarking on his second year teaching at Limestone College in Columbia, South Carolina, in the Criminal Justice Department. He enters that classroom each evening with the passion and desire to empower the next generation of law enforcement professionals.

Chief Randy Scott is the son of Dewey and Virginia Scott, a graduate of W.J. Kennan High School, the husband of the former Heidi deRijke and the proud father of eight wonderful kids.

To watch the *Voices of Diversity* PSA starring Chief Randy Scott, visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/RCCASA#p/u/1/G2F8UZqm3fc>



*Chief Scott, James Wash and the RCCASA Quarterbacks stand proud at the RCCASA Judge Hatchett Appreciation. (Left)*

*Chief Randy Scott escorting the Honorable Judge Hatchett from the Judges' Chambers to the Judge's Bench in a Richland County Court Room.*



*Chief Randy Scott at Richland County CASA's Cook-Out in the park for Law Enforcement and 1<sup>st</sup> Responders.*



*Special Thanks to the City of Columbia Police Department*

# It Couldn't Be Done

By Edgar A. Guest

Somebody said that it couldn't be done,  
But he with a chuckle replied  
That "maybe it couldn't," but he would be one  
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.  
So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin on his face.  
If he worried he hid it.  
He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn't be done, and he did it.  
Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that;  
At least no one ever has done it";  
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,  
And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.  
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,  
Without any doubting or quiddit,  
He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn't be done, and he did it.  
There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,  
There are thousands to prophesy failure;  
There are thousands to point out to you one by one,  
The dangers that wait to assail you,  
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,  
Just take off your coat and go to it;  
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing  
That "cannot be done," and you'll do it.

## **Richland County CASA Volunteer Advisory Board Members**

*(2009-Current)*

Cole McNair

Carolyn Bone

Eliabeth Halbing

Kevin Curry

Sabrina Miller

Earl Hudgins

Jeffery Vaughn

Lisa Johnson

Marilyn Burnett

Michael Greene

Jonathan Slager

Mel Stebbins

Nick Sipe

Louise Albert

Robin Dawson

Steve Schar

Jack Bonneville

## **Presenting Richland County CASA VAC Board Members' Bios**



### **VAC-Carolyn Bone**

Carolyn is a family law attorney living and working in Columbia, South Carolina. She has volunteered with CASA for five years, and serves on the South Carolina Bar Children's Law Committee and the Young Lawyer's Division Protecting Our Youth project. For the past two years, Carolyn has also helped train new CASA volunteers. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, cooking, and photography.



### **VAC-Marilyn Washington-Burnett**

Marilyn Washington-Burnett became a Casa Volunteer three years ago and was appointed to the Volunteer Advisory Council last year. Marilyn have always loved working with youth and for more than 15 years have volunteered in many capacities; PTA, Youth Advisor and Director, Bible School teacher, Coach and Basketball Official.

Born in Washington, DC, married to Jay Burnett they have four children and three grandchildren. Marilyn relocated to Columbia, SC five years ago after a long career as a Customer Service Representative for a major airline. In pursuit of a new career she decided to return to college after more than 25 years earning an Associate's Degree in Human Services from Midlands Technical College and working on her Bachelor's Degree at Columbia College.

Her mission is to use the gifts and talents that God has blessed her with to serve Him, her family, church and community. Her personal philosophy is "STAYING TRUE TO WHAT IS RIGHT AND GOD WILL BLESS YOU AND USE YOU TO HELP OTHERS" – 1 Timothy 4:16. Marilyn believes that wherever there is a person in need and they reach out, she has an obligation to help them to the best of her ability.



**VAC-Cole McNair**

Cole McNair is a first year law student at the University of South Carolina School of Law. He has volunteered with Richland County CASA for over three years. In addition to serving as a Guardian ad Litem, he has trained new guardians, helped to revise training materials to streamline the training process, and mentored new guardians. Cole also serves as the chair of the Volunteer Advisory Committee. Previous volunteer experiences include at the Medical University of South Carolina Children's Hospital where he served on the Volunteer Advisory Council and co-chaired the finance subcommittee. In his free time, Cole enjoys hiking, racquetball, the arts, and spending time with his family.



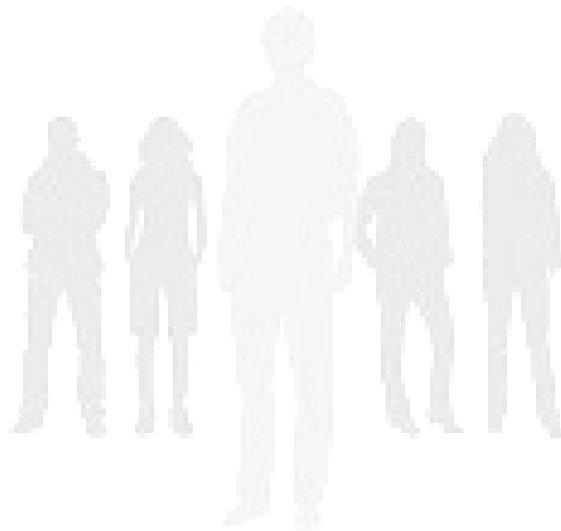
**VAC – Sabrina Miller**

Sabrina D. Miller has been a CASA volunteer for three years. She is also a member of the Volunteer Advisory Council for RCCASA and offers training and support for new volunteers to the agency. She has been an advocate for children for many years. She has been employed with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Columbia for more than 10 years and is a former Executive Director of a youth development organization and a truancy mediator. She is a graduate of Springfield College and holds a Masters Degree in Human Services. She is the proud mother of two beautiful daughters, Chelsea and Morgan and enjoys reading and traveling in her spare time.



## **VAC – Jonathan Slager**

Jonathan Slager (J.D. USC 2009; B.A. Philosophy, International Studies, Political Science USC 2006; B.S. Psychology USC 2011) clerked at the Richland County Public Defender’s Office from 2007-2010. During law school, he was president of the Children’s Advocacy Law Society and an active member of the Public Interest Law Society. Jonathan has been a CASA volunteer for four years and chaired the Training & Mentoring VAC subcommittee; this work is supplemented by pursuit of a career in forensic psychology.



# OWNing It



## **Mission Statement Volunteer Advisory Council Richland County CASA**

The Richland County CASA Volunteer Advisory Committee is an assembly of concerned volunteers that seek to promote the welfare of children by creating a forum for the suggestions and concerns of CASA Guardians ad Litem. Moreover, the VAC serves as an intermediary between CASA staff and volunteers. In furtherance of these objectives, the committee will focus on recruiting volunteers, training and mentoring guardians, and locating resources to better support the over arching CASA structure.

## **Richland County Diversity Statement**

As the organization that advocates for any child referred by the Family Court in Richland County, South Carolina, Richland County CASA is committed to understanding and honoring the diversity of the families from which they come. Here while racial and ethnic differences may be most evident, we also recognize diversity in socioeconomic status, cultural background, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical and mental ability and viewpoints.

We believe that a child can be best served by a CASA volunteer who is culturally competent and who has personal experience in the child's own culture. It is also important that CASA volunteers be able to communicate sensitively with children and their families in order to communicate children's needs in court. For these reasons, we believe it is in the best interest of children to have program staff, volunteers and board members who reflect the characteristics of the population served. We intend not to merely to state this commitment in writing, but to make it readily apparent in Richland County's hiring practices, volunteer recruitment and training, Board appointments, public outreach and in each person's everyday actions on behalf of abused and neglected children. Richland County CASA fully endorses the principles and goals outlined in the National CASA diversity policy.



# By-laws Volunteer Advisory Council Richland County CASA



**Article I: Name**

This advisory board will be known as the Richland County CASA Volunteer Advisory Council (heretofore VAC or Council).

**Article II: Mission Statement**

The Richland County CASA Volunteer Advisory Committee is an assembly of concerned volunteers that seeks to promote the welfare of children by creating a forum for the suggestions and concerns of CASA Guardians ad Litem. Moreover, the VAC serves as an intermediary between CASA staff and volunteers. In furtherance of these objectives, the committee will focus on recruiting volunteers, training and mentoring guardians, and locating resources to better support the overarching CASA structure.

**Article III: Purpose**

The RC CASA VAC is established to provide a body for exchange of Ideas between Richland County CASA employees and the volunteer body. Further, the Council serves to foster and promote activities to the benefit of current and future CASA volunteer Guardians ad Litem. Finally, the Council seeks to assist CASA staff with other needs of the program as

**Article IV: Goals**

- To promote successful retention of Guardians ad Litem.
- To aid volunteers in conducting their duties.
- To give a voice to volunteer needs to the Richland County CASA leadership.
- To aid Richland County CASA in being more effective in carrying out its programs.

**Special thanks to Marion County, Oregon Volunteer Advisory Board  
for usage of their By-laws for reference.**



# By-laws

## Volunteer Advisory Council

### Richland County CASA



#### Article V: Membership

**Appointment:** The Council shall be comprised of between twelve and twenty members appointed by Richland County CASA with approval of VAC leadership; all members will serve at the pleasure of Richland County CASA. Members shall be appointed for terms of two years but may serve an unlimited number of consecutive terms as agreeable to the member, Richland County CASA, and VAC leadership. The VAC may recommend proposed members for appointment to the Council. Approval of appointments will rest with Richland County CASA staff and VAC leadership.

**Duties & Expectations:** Members will complete tasks assigned by the chairperson and will carry out assignments from committees to which they have been appointed as well as those tasks designated by VAC leadership. Members are expected to be knowledgeable about the essential matters confronting the Council. Members are expected to act in compliance with the Council's by-laws in all actions as a VAC member.

#### Article VI: Termination

**Removal:** Termination will be at the discretion of Richland County CASA and VAC leadership. Termination for violation of attendance policies and other violations of Council by-laws will be handled by Richland County CASA and VAC leadership at their discretion. Members may also be terminated by vote of the VAC as a whole. Such termination requires a majority vote of the entire membership for removal of the member in question.

**Resignation:** Resignation by members shall be submitted in writing to the Council chairperson and the Richland County CASA staff representative to the Council. Resignations will be announced at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

**Reasons for Dismissal:** A member may be removed from the Council for violation of the attendance policy, violation of Council by-laws, or when the VAC determines that a member's service is no longer advantageous for the Council at large.

**Special thanks to Marion County, Oregon Volunteer Advisory Board  
for usage of their By-laws for reference.**



# By-laws Volunteer Advisory Council Richland County CASA



## **Article VII: Attendance**

All VAC members are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings. More than two unexcused absences by any member during any twelve month period may result in removal of the member from the Council. A member's absence is unexcused if the member fails to notify either Richland County CASA staff or VAC leadership that the member will not attend the meeting. Excessive excused absences may also constitute reason for dismissal as attendance and input from members is necessary to the functioning of the Council. Dismissal of members from the Council will be at the discretion of Richland County CASA staff and VAC leadership.

## **Article VIII: Meetings**

**Regular Meetings:** The Council will meet as required to conduct its business. Meetings will be held at least every other month. More meetings will be scheduled as required to conduct the business of the entire VAC.

**Place of Meetings:** Meetings are generally held in the Richland County CASA boardroom, located at the Richland County Judicial Center, Third Floor, 1701 Main Street, Columbia, S.C., 29202. If the location of the meeting is different, members will be notified in a timely manner before the meeting.

**Minutes:** Minutes will be prepared by either the Council chairperson or secretary and distributed to the membership within one week of the meeting. Minutes will include a description of members present, proposals, substance of any discussions on any matter, and reference to any document discussed.

**Special thanks to Marion County, Oregon Volunteer Advisory Board  
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# By-laws Volunteer Advisory Council Richland County CASA



**Agenda:** Items may be placed on the meeting agenda by any Council member or Richland County CASA staff. The agenda will be distributed to members days before the meeting.

## Article IX: Officers

**Chairperson:** A chairperson will serve as the leader of the VAC. The chairperson will be appointed by Richland County CASA staff. The chairperson may serve for a term as agreeable to both the chairperson and Richland County CASA. The chair person will act as leader of the convened meetings. The chairperson will enforce membership rules and guide the conduct of the meeting. The chairperson will serve as the official spokesperson for the Council as a whole when required. If the chairperson is absent from a meeting, the secretary will act on the chairperson's behalf.

**Secretary:** A secretary will serve as assistant to the chairperson and aid in running meetings, formulating agendas and minutes, and the like. The secretary will serve at the pleasure of the chairperson with the chairperson selecting the position.

## Article X: Standing Committees (the VAC is currently considering elimination of standing committees in favor of the entire body acting as a whole.)

**Appointment:** The Council may authorize the chairperson to appoint members to standing committees. Standing committees for the Council will include:

- Fundraising and Fund Development
- Mentoring and Training
- Recruitment

**Responsibilities:** Each committee will serve to create and manage initiatives corresponding with the title of that committee

**Special thanks to Marion County, Oregon Volunteer Advisory Board for usage of their By-laws for reference.**



# By-laws

## Volunteer Advisory Council

### Richland County CASA



**Leadership:** Leadership of the committees will be selected by the chairperson with input of the membership as to who would like to serve in leadership positions.

**Membership:** Membership of the committees will be selected by the chairperson with input of the membership as to who would like to serve on which committee.

#### **Article XI: Voting**

All items requiring a vote from the membership will be voted up or down by simple majority of those in attendance. For voting to occur, a quorum of the membership must be in attendance.

#### **Article XII: Amending By-laws**

All amendments to the by-laws must be submitted in writing to the chairperson. The chairperson will distribute the amendment to the membership before the meeting at which discussion of the amendment will occur. A simple majority vote of members present will be necessary to determine whether or not the amendment will be voted on for possible inclusion by the entire membership. Voting on the amendment will occur at the next regularly scheduled meeting after the discussion. All votes on amendments require a vote from the full membership to be determined by simple majority.

**Special thanks to Marion County, Oregon Volunteer Advisory Board  
for usage of their By-laws for reference.**



**By-laws  
Volunteer Advisory Council  
Richland County CASA**



**Article XIII: Ratification**

**ADOPTED BY: Richland County CASA Volunteer**

**Advisory Council** this 25<sup>th</sup> day of January 2011.



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S. Coleman McNair, Chairperson

*James Washington*

James Washington, CASA Staff Representative

**Special thanks to Marion County, Oregon Volunteer Advisory Board  
for usage of their By-laws for reference.**

## **Creating and Developing an Effective and Diverse VAC for Your Program**

**C- Create** a matrix with a list of skills, expertise, and diverse backgrounds needed based on the needs of your program.

Example: We needed people who were **responsible, active in the program, willing to give extra time, and who possessed a diverse skill set that could be put to use.** Think of people who may have asked "is there anything else I can do?" or those who stand out as particularly motivated, reliable, and do consistently good work. You may want to meet with your CASA staff to brainstorm some names.

**A - Ask** volunteers if they would be interested in being a part of a "core group" of other volunteers dedicated to improving the program. You may want to ask between 15-30 people- not all of them will be willing or able to participate, or might only attend a few meetings before "floating away."

**S- Start** putting together materials for your first VAC meeting. You will need to meet with your CASA staff to decide what areas of your program need improvement (recruiting, fundraising, retention), then develop a set of goals that a VAC could help you meet (recruit 50 new volunteers, raise \$1,000 for Holiday Gift Drive, retain existing volunteers).

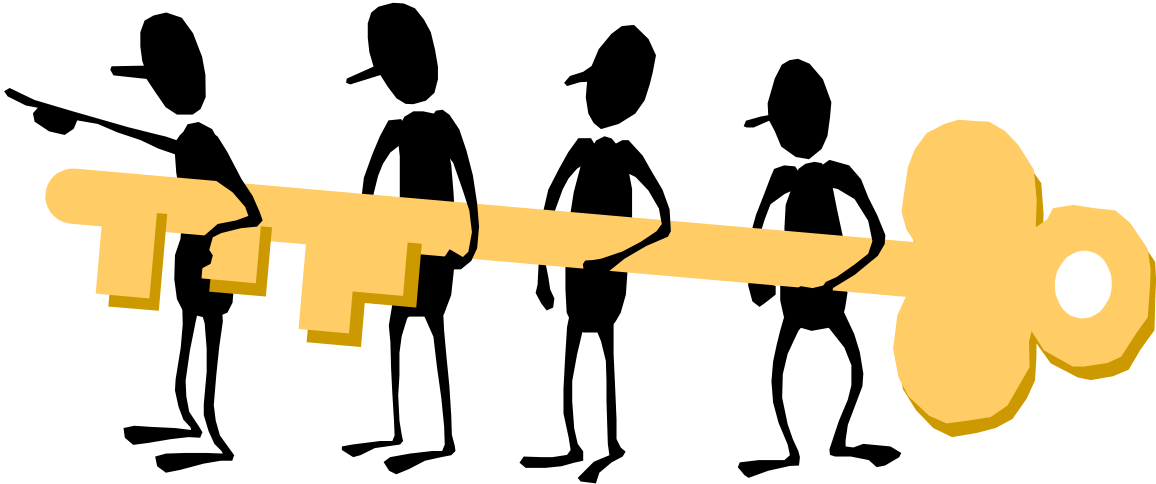
**A - Arrange** an "interest meeting" for your pool of selected volunteers. Share your goals with the potential VAC members and allow them to brainstorm possible solutions (recruiting events, Local Celebrity Breakfast Fundraiser, Volunteer Appreciation Programs).

**V- Evaluate-** Does there seem to be enough interest from your volunteers to continue? Do you need to expand your pool of "potentials?" If you have enough interested people, invite them back for a second meeting in 1-2 weeks. At this meeting, your volunteers will need to choose (at a minimum) a chairperson to organize future meetings, and a secretary to record minutes.

**A- Award** the chairperson the responsibility of setting up regular meetings with the new VAC. The chairperson will need to meet regularly with CASA staff to determine how the VAC can best be of service to the CASA program. The chairperson will then work with his or her committee to brainstorm, plan, and execute ways to meet these goals.

**C- Care-** In their "everyday" lives, our VAC members are attorneys, students, social workers, retirees, and government personnel, to name just a few. Always remember that your volunteers are just that- people who are willing to freely give their time to help with a cause they believe in. Be respectful of their time and resources, and offer consistent support and guidance.

## Key to a Successful VAC is *Knowing and Playing Your Position*



We *must* be the champions and be the best because guardians have so many duties and responsibilities; we're pulled in some many different directions be everyone with their own agenda. The VAC is no exception; in fact, we must rise above even the normal standard of excellence. This expectation of excellence must be expressed early during the VAC member selection process so that a strong VAC culture can be established.

To be successful, the VAC must work just like any sports team. Each team needs leaders and followers: someone must be in charge, and others must be able to carry out assignments to make the team function smoothly. While all team members need to be aware of the team's general goals, the leaders must be more in touch with the specifics of the plan and use this knowledge to guide the rest of the team and force the mission to trickle down to the individuals who are actually implementing the plan. Even though someone may want to chair a committee, they may not be most suited to a leadership role, and the creators of the VAC must pay special attention to the leadership skills and styles of all proposed leaders to ensure that the best leader is selected.

Also, just like a sports team, the VAC must be composed of different types of people. No basketball team could be successful with five centers, or five point guards, or five forwards, and the VAC must have different

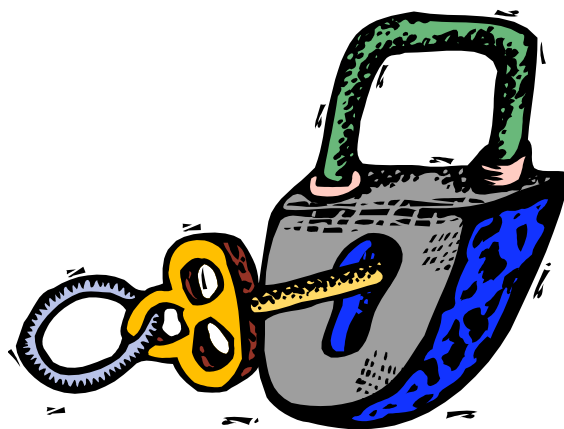
personalities, too. Even if Michael Jordan could be cloned, a team that was comprised solely of Michael Jordan clones would not be championship caliber. Jordan was a good shooter, and a good dribbler, and had good instincts, but a 7 foot tall player could out-rebound him, and other players were better 3-point shooters, and others were better passers. By specializing roles, a basketball team can allow each player to be the best at their job, allowing the team to be more versatile as an entire unit. For example, someone who enjoys meeting new people and can quickly empathize with someone, or even a person who works as a salesman, may be most suited to recruitment, whereas someone who is more comfortable with established relationships might find better success focusing on training already existing guardians. VAC leaders must be able to recognize volunteer talents and have the latitude to shift people into appropriate roles for their personalities. There's a reason that tall players get the most rebounds and short players get more steals--they match their abilities to the job requirements and find the right fit for each individual.

Once a winning team is established, another challenge arises: success must be sustained. Every team wants to win a championship, but no one can remember which team won the 1983 NBA championship; instead, people remember that both the Lakers and the Celtics were amazing dynasties that dominated the entire decade of the eighties. A successful team must not rest on their laurels, but they must keep pushing ahead. To ensure that a winning team continues to be great, they must be pushed toward higher standards. To avoid stagnation, watch out for regularly occurring events which dominate the planning landscape. For example, let's assume that that CASA holds a training session every year focused on the Super Bowl and recruiting male guardians; let's also assume that this event is mildly successful each year and that the necessary numbers of male guardians are recruited. Even though the goals are being met, it's easy to fall into a pattern of only looking for male volunteers during that special time frame. Instead, goals must be refreshed by either raising the quota or holding new events during the other parts of the year so that people are forced to improve themselves and their work. Winning a single championship is nice, but creating a team that wins every year is our goal.

Finally, people must be held accountable. Kobe Bryant is a great basketball player and he gets paid accordingly. However, if Kobe only scores 5 points

per game next for the next couple of years, no team will give him a big payday when its time for his next contract. It doesn't matter how good his stats were in the past, or how high he can jump or how fast he can run, if he doesn't produce, he will not get a big payday. Likewise, people need a goal to which they can aspire; when they reach this goal they need to be rewarded, and if they fail, the issue needs to be addressed. Keep in mind that the VAC doesn't exist to make members feel good about themselves or to pad their resume; we're here to make sure that children are given a chance for success, and the VAC must ensure that that its members are achieving their potential. This might entail setting a yearly fundraising goal, while still performing quarterly checks to make sure that the fundraising team is on the right course. Even if the VAC is composed of the nicest, most caring individuals, if the necessary goals are not met, the VAC is a failure.

As we've seen, the VAC is just like a championship sports team: it needs a mixture of leaders and followers; it needs to have the right people in the right positions; it needs to continually present new challenges; and it must hold team members accountable. When these issues are understood and addressed, not only does the VAC and CASA meet its goals, but we become champions on which children can rely.



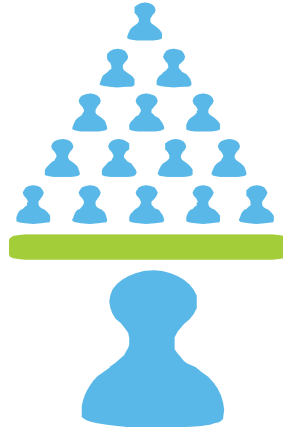
## ***ASSESSING***

*Some of your greatest resources are already within reach. Use what you have to get what you want. However, don't lose focus of what is essential with regard to Maslow's Theory- a want is exactly what you want- a need is a need. Do you have access to you needs?  
Remember to prioritize when assessing.*



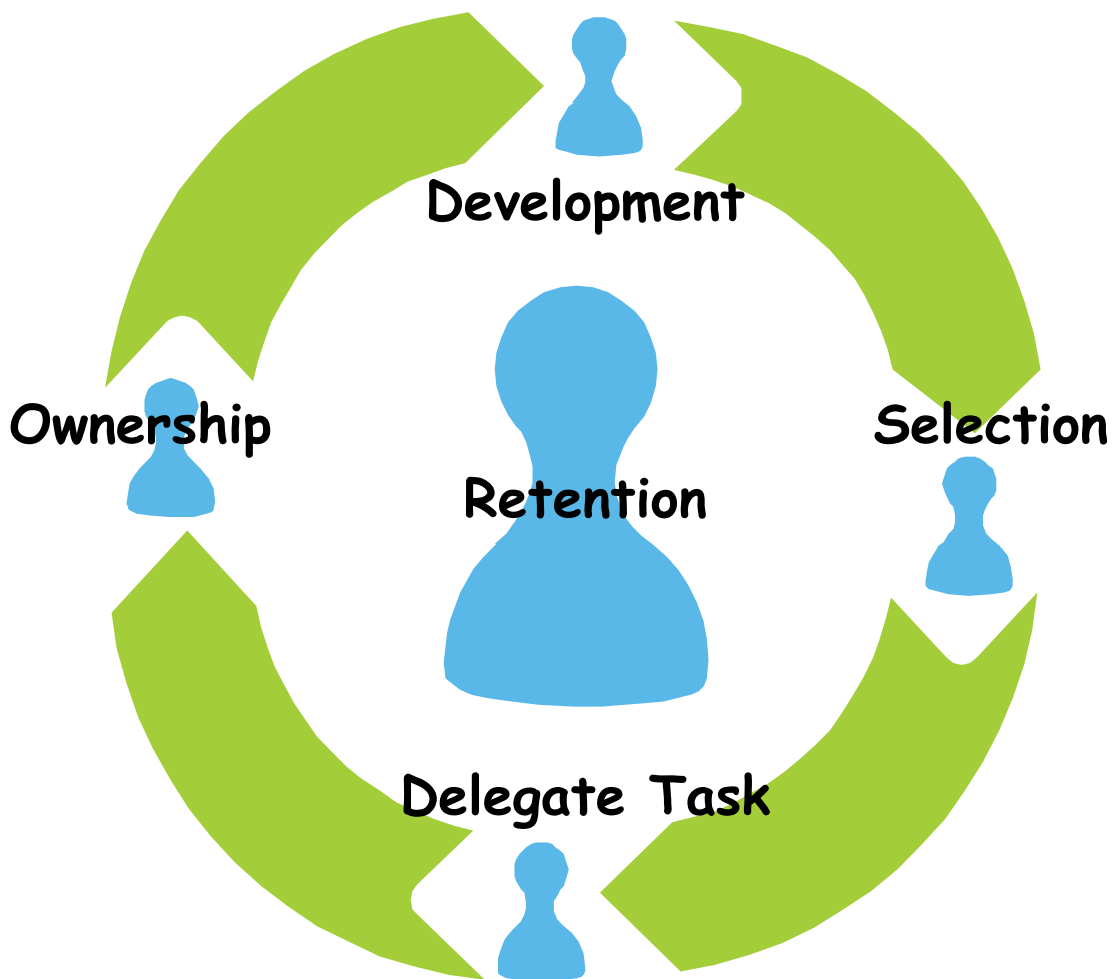
“Treat People as if they were what they ought to be, and help them become what they are capable of being.”  
- Goethe

## VAC -Capacity Building



- It increases the decision-making capacity of VAC
- It gives the volunteers a sense of ownership of the program
- It increases the communication between staff and volunteers
- It enhances the reputation and credibility of the program
- It maximizes resource usage. The more involved VAC members are, the less time staff is required to spend performing other job duties.
- It allows staff to provide a higher quality support to volunteers.

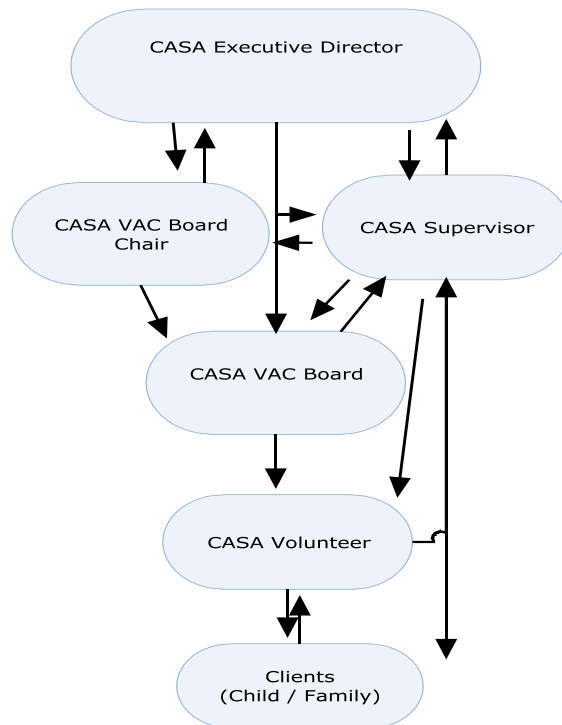
# VAC-Capacity Building Cycle



# Volunteer's Voice to CASA's Management and Staff



*CASA VAC Information Flow Chart*



# CREATING A SUCCESSFUL VAC PROGRAM

♥Commitment

♥Involvement

♥Diversity

## WHAT DO I BRING TO THE TABLE?



It takes a wealth of skills, knowledge, resources, and talents to make your agency successful. The sum of the whole is greater than the individual parts. Where do you fit in?



Take a look at yourself and examine the ways in which you might contribute:

**Skills/Talents:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Knowledge:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Resources:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Experience:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**“Ask not what the VAC can do for me, but what I can do for the VAC”**

# OVERALL VAC ASSESSMENT



Please read each statement below. Check “Yes” if the statement is true all the time, “Some” if it is partially true, and “No” if the statement is never true.

	Yes	Some	No
<b>1. The VAC member has a full understanding of CASA mission/purpose.</b>			
<b>2. The organizational structure is clear (i.e., the relationship of the Board, committees, ED, and staff).</b>			
<b>3. The VAC members are clear about their roles and responsibilities.</b>			
<b>4. The VAC contains an appropriate range of expertise and diversity to make it an effective organization.</b>			
<b>5. Committees are organized effectively and efficiently.</b>			
<b>6. Committees meet as needed, have a defined purpose, and produce desired results.</b>			
<b>7. Recruitment is a performance expectation for all VAC members.</b>			
<b>8. The VAC effectively represents the organization in the community.</b>			
<b>9. VAC meetings are well-attended.</b>			
<b>10. VAC meetings focus on important matters.</b>			
<b>11. VAC members receive appropriate recognition for their work.</b>			
<b>12. Volunteers receive appropriate recognition for their work.</b>			
<b>13. The VAC effectively handles and resolves conflicts.</b>			

# ~ From the Prospective VAC Member ~

**Questions They Might Be Thinking Before Committing!!!!**



- A. Why are they interested in me becoming a VAC member?**
- B. What role do they see me playing?**
- C. What is unique about the VAC?**
- D. What will my responsibilities as a VAC member be?**
- E. What will I need to know to be an effective VAC member?**
- F. Will I receive appropriate training?**
- G. Will CASA support me after training or will I be on my own?**
- H. How much time will this take?**
- I. Am I expected to participate in fund raising?**
- J. Does this VAC have a plan? If so, are they following it?**
- K. What are the VAC's immediate goals?**

# ***PLANNING***

*Planning is a vital and fundamental process for repetitive success. It is often said the one that fails to plan, plans to fail. Success is the key; don't let the doors of opportunity remained locked as a result of not exercising key planning.*



Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare.

-Japanese Proverb

# BEFORE YOU BEGIN A VAC RECRUITMENT INITIATIVE

## Planning Readiness Checklist



Yes	No	Criteria
		1. Commitment and support from the top leadership, especially the executive director and board president, throughout the entire process.
		2. Commitment to clarifying roles and expectations for all participants in the planning process, including clarity as to who will contribute to the plan and who will be the decision makers.
		3. Willingness to understand and respond to the organization’s internal and external environment (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats); a commitment to gathering relevant information for assessing current programs and evaluating how to meet current and future recruitment needs-sufficient market research.
		4. A diverse group of individuals who are willing to be active participants on the Planning Committee.
		5. Willingness to be inclusive and encourage broad participation, so that people feel “ownership” of and are energized by the process.
		6. A board, staff, and volunteer that understands the purpose of planning, realizes what it is and is not able to accomplish, and has consensus about the desired outcomes of the planning process.
		7. A willingness to question the status quo, to look at new ways of doing things; a willingness to ask the hard questions, face difficult choices, and make decisions that are best for the children served.
		8. Good working relationships and no serious unhealthy conflicts between key participants.
		9. An understanding and appreciation of key lessons from the organizations history (successes and challenges).

## ***DOING***

*The final part to the equation yields the results. When adding the assessments to the planning, the outcomes are the byproducts of your efforts. In the words of Oscar Winning Jamie Foxx in the movie Ray- the unofficial motto at Richland County CASA is not only, “it is what it is” but “make it do what it do”.*



“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I will remember. Involve me and I will learn.”  
- Benjamin Franklin

# Volunteer Advisory Council Roles and Responsibilities



The VAC serves as the volunteer's voice to CASA management and staff. The VAC will meet quarterly and be an integral part of the CASA management team. VAC members agree to adhere to CASA's confidentiality policies.

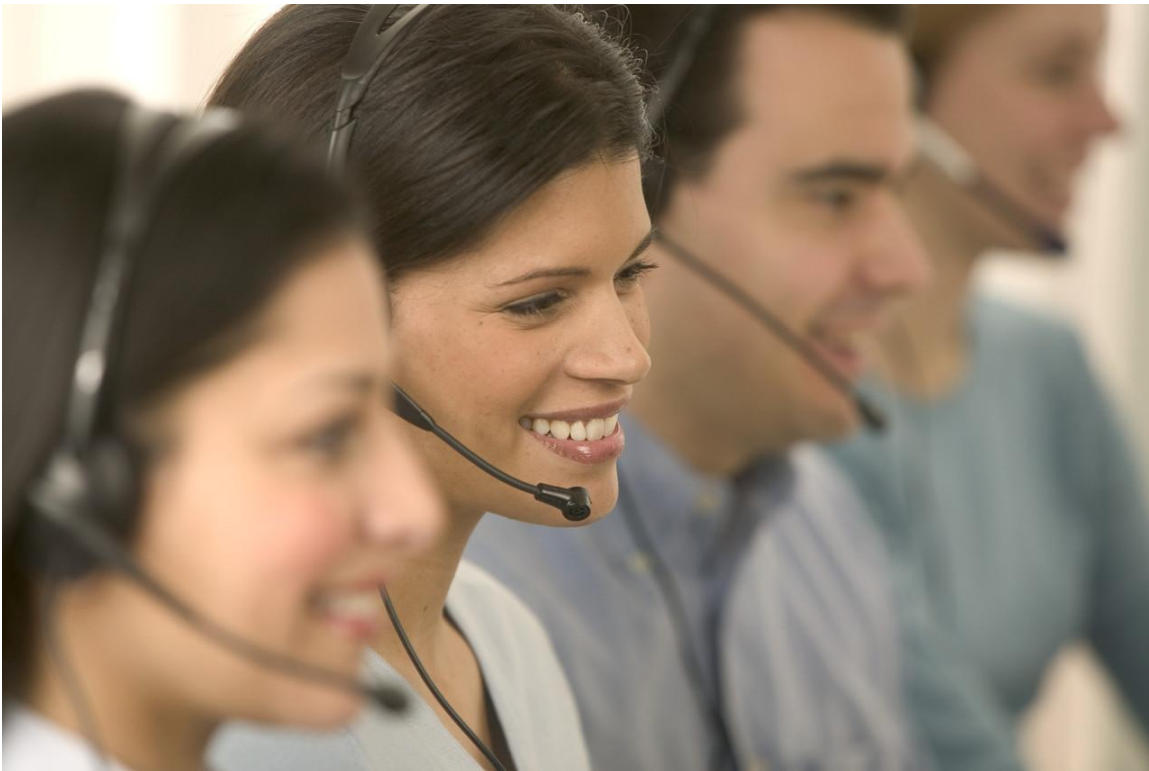
- **Access status of inactive CASA volunteers**
- **Help identify volunteer retention strategies**
- **Promote Diversity and inclusion throughout organization**
- **Assist with recruitment initiatives**
- **Assist with volunteers**
- **Assist with identifying potential board of director members**
- **Assist with planning Child Abuse Awareness Events**
- **Assist with identifying augmented funding for CASA program development and supports volunteers**
- **Identify current volunteers willing to serve as coaches for new volunteers**
- **Conduct satisfaction surveys**
- **Assist with heightened public awareness of CASA and child abuse issues**
- **Assist with guardian training**

- **Serve as a liaison between CASA staff and volunteers**

## **Activity 1**

### **Contacting inactive GALs**

One of the first activities undertaken by the VAC and assigned by the RCCASA leadership was contacting all inactive guardians. Each VAC member was assigned a number of inactive guardians to contact and given the guardians' contact information. The VAC chairperson created a form (see form on next page) for the VAC member to fill out based upon information received from the guardians contacted. On this form, the VAC member recorded the guardian's willingness to serve as a guardian in the future, willingness to serve the organization in another capacity, updated contact information, and any information they wished to share with RCCASA that would have made their guardian experience better. This allowed for supervisors to update the guardian database by deleting inactive guardians and to receive information as to how the program could be improved to the benefit of future guardians.



*Form for use when contacting inactive guardians:*

<b>First Name:</b>			
<b>Middle Name:</b>			
<b>Last Name:</b>			
<b>Address Line 1:</b>		<b>Home Phone:</b>	
<b>Address Line 2:</b>		<b>Work Phone:</b>	
<b>City:</b>		<b>Fax:</b>	
<b>State:</b>		<b>Pager:</b>	
<b>Zip Code:</b>		<b>Mobile Phone:</b>	
<b>County:</b>		<b>E-mail:</b>	
		<b>Emergency Contact:</b>	
		<b>Emergency Phone:</b>	

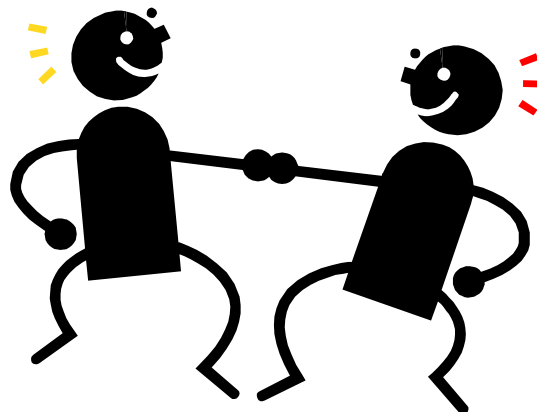
<b>Willingness to Serve</b>	
<b>Active Guardian Ad Litem:</b>	
<b>Assisting with Fundraiser(s):</b>	
<b>Help Obtain Christmas Gifts for Children:</b>	
<b>Sponsor a Meal for the Pre-Service Training Class:</b>	
<b>Help CASA Staff with Tasks:</b>	
	<b>Information Technology:</b>
	<b>Website:</b>
	<b>Answering Phones:</b>
	<b>Filing:</b>
	<b>Other (specify):</b>
<b>Time Period for a Return to Service:</b>	

<b>Ways CASA Could Improve to Increase GAL Activity</b>

## Activity 2- Mentoring

In conjunction with RCCASA Program Services Manager for training and recruitment, James Washington, the VAC has begun a mentoring program for new guardian ad litem. The VAC chairperson and other members of the VAC meet the new training group during their training experiences. They share information with the trainees about the mentoring program. Following training, VAC members are given contact information for new trainees. VAC members establish contact quickly following training with the trainees. They attempt to establish a rapport with the new trainee(s) and offer support during the trainee's first case. This includes meeting with the new trainee to offer guidance on whom to interview and questions to ask, offering to accompany trainees on initial home visits, reviewing and assisting with court report writing, and accompanying trainees to their first hearing. The goal is to provide this guidance during the guardian's first case, making them independent and informed for future cases. Further, this assistance is designed to reduce the work demand on RCCASA supervisors.

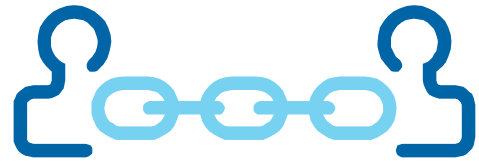
As of yet, this program has had trouble finding success. Many trainees have been reluctant to utilize their VAC mentors. The VAC is working making the program more effective. This includes beginning contact with trainees during training and immediately following training rather than waiting for their first case to be assigned. Further, VAC is currently considering having socials or other events following the trainings to be attended by both the trainees and their mentors to help foster the relationships and make the relationship more effective.



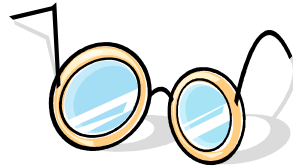
### Activity 3- Training

The VAC has made efforts toward improving the training experience for incoming Guardians ad Litem. RC CASA has added interactive training elements. A hypothetical scenario from the National CASA training materials is utilized. A shortened format of this scenario is distribution to trainees. The training sessions are broken into small groups. Each VAC member played the role of one of the individuals in the scenario. Trainees asked questions of the VAC members as though they were doing an actual interview with a CASA family. The VAC members assisted with ideas for questions and then gave feedback about how the GAL process occurs and various procedural issues. Trainees have noted that these sessions have been amongst the most rewarding and informative of their CASA training experience. *Special thanks to James Washington for his assistance and guidance on instituting this new addition to training!*





## Power of Observation



**1. On a standard traffic light, is the green on the top or Bottom?**

- Top
- Middle
- Bottom

**2. How many states are there in the USA?**

- Forty-eight states
- Fifty states
- Fifty-one states

**3. In which hand is the Statue of Liberty's torch?**

- Right hand
- Left hand
- Both hands

**4. What six colors are on the classic Campbell's soup label?**

- Gray, red, white, yellow, black& gold
- Blue, red, white, yellow, black& gold
- Blue, red, white, green, black& gold

**5. What two numbers on the telephone dial don't have letters by them?**

- Zero and nine
- Five and zero
- One and zero

**6. When you walk does your left arm swing with your right or left leg?**

- Left
- Right
- Neither

**7. How many matches are in a standard pack?**

- Twenty
- Twenty-four
- Thirty- two

**8. On the United States flag is the top stripe red or white?**

- Blue
- White
- Red

**9. What is the lowest whole number on the FM dial?**

- 87
- 88
- 89

**10. Which way does water go down the drain, counter or clockwise?**

- Counter clockwise
- Clockwise
- Straight down

**11. Which way does a "No Smoking" sign's slash run?**

- Towards top right
- Towards bottom right
- Towards bottom right

**12. How many channels on a VHF television dial?**

- 13
- 12
- 11

**13. On which side of a women's blouse are the buttons?**

- Left
- Right
- Neither

**14. Which way do fans rotate?**

- Counter clockwise
- Clockwise
- Neither

**15. How many sides does a stop sign have?**

- Five
- Six
- Eight

**16. Do books have even-numbered pages on the right or left side?**

- Right
- Left
- Middle

**17. How many lug nuts are on a standard car wheel?**

- Five
- Six
- Eight

**18. How many sides are there on a standard pencil?**

- Four
- Five
- Six

**19. Sleepy, Happy, Sneezzy, Grumpy, Dopey, Doc. Who's missing?**

- Clumsy
- Bashful
- Itchy

**20. How many hot dog buns are in a standard pack?**

- Six
- Eight
- Ten

**21. On which playing card is the maker's trademark?**

- King of Hearts
- Joker
- Ace of Spades

**22. On which side of a Venetian blind is the cord that adjusts the opening between the slats?**

- Right
- Left
- Middle

**23. There are 12 buttons on a tone phone. What 2 symbols bear no digits?**

- \* and #
- @ and #
- \* and \$

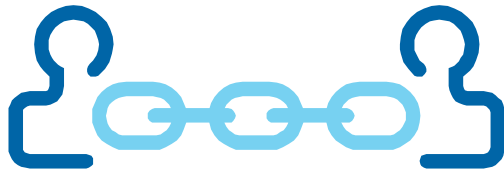
**24. How many curves are there in the standard paper clip?**

- Two
- Three
- Four

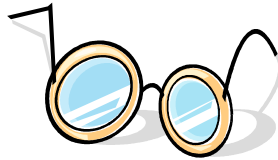
**25. Does a merry-go-round turn counter or clockwise?**

- North
- Clockwise
- Counter

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## Power of Observation-Answers



1. Bottom
2. Fifty States
3. Right Hand
4. Blue, Red, White, Yellow, Black, Gold
5. One and Zero
6. Right
7. Twenty
8. Red
9. 88
10. Clockwise
11. Towards Bottom Right
12. 12
13. Left
14. Clockwise
15. Eight
16. Left
17. Five
18. Six
19. Bashful
20. Eight
21. Ace of Spades
22. Left
23. \*and #
24. Three
25. Counter

**Special Thanks to the Following:**



## A Volunteer's Voice

*Written by*  
Heyward Hall  
(Richland County CASA Staff)

Let me offer my heart & soul,  
And I will always give,  
Giving endlessly just to hear your story,  
I can lend you my ear if you will trust me,  
Allow me to enter your world,  
And shelter you from harm's way,  
For I promise to safeguard your emotions,  
While assisting you achieve your hopes and dreams,  
As you are the very reason I give,  
Hearing your heart cry makes mine quiver,  
Empathizing with your eternal plight,  
For you and only you are the only reason why I give.





*Left to right (bottom) James Washington, Pamela Nipper, Shawn Harmon, Hope Gossett, Lela Allen-Haines, Sharon Walker, Heyward Hall  
Left to right (top) Thomas Clark, Melissa Bowman, Vicki Raven, Paige Greene, Tina Thomas, Adrienne Kelish, Carlton Boyd  
Angie Kohel (Not pictured).*

***Thank You!!!!***  
***~ Richland County CASA Staff~***

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