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North Iowa CASA News



CASA Volunteer Spotlight – Donna Schaefer

Donna Schaefer was sworn in as a Court Appointed Special Advocate on November 14th, 2013.

Donna has been married to her husband, Merlin, for 39 years and their combined families include four children; Kari, Scott, Conner and Ian.



Donna (right) pictured with her daughter

Donna had aspired to be a high school band director/ teacher early in life but having two young children, she found herself entering the nursing field because she wanted something she could finish in two years. She says, “That certainly turned out to be the best path I could have taken.”

Donna recently retired from a long career in nursing. She has held positions in hospital, clinic, and residential care facilities but spent the last 20 years doing home health care as a team leader. She explains that this included the responsibility of coordinated compliance with policies and procedures, joint commission, etc. She says, “ I always loved studying and knowing the rules.”

Donna enjoys many hobbies; sewing/quilting, making things from recycled wood, container gardening, traveling, bird watching, studying and collecting antiques, and playing on her computer . In her retirement she is also learning photography. She loves music and concerts, and is in search of a low cost tenor saxophone so she can try out the New Horizon’s Band. Donna loves spending quality time with her grandkids who range in age from 9 to 14.

When asked about other volunteer activities, Donna confesses to random acts of kindness in her community.

Something no one would ever guess about Donna is her interest in Big Foot shows. She says she started watching Big Foot shows as a way to relate and spend time with her grandsons but it has become something she really enjoys!

Special points of interest:

- CASA Volunteer Spotlight.
- New Volunteer Recruitment Campaign
- Guest Column written by Nichole Benes, Assistant Cerro Gordo County Attorney
- Winter Fun & Food

Thank you to the following contributors:
3M Volunteer Match
Stratford Foundation

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New CASA Volunteers

Please welcome our newest CASA Volunteers:

Donna Schaefer, Cristy Tass, and Lee Soma





Everyone is a Recruiter!



Iowa CASA was awarded a grant from National CASA to launch a new recruitment campaign in effort of reaching the goal of a CASA for every child. This may seem a lofty goal but every child deserves the best and we believe we can do no less. Please join our efforts and check out the simple ways you can help.



Facebook: Visit and "LIKE" the [North Iowa CASA Facebook page](http://www.facebook.com/NorthIowaCASA) at www.facebook.com/NorthIowaCASA, the [Iowa CASA Facebook page](http://www.facebook.com/CASAIowa) at www.facebook.com/CASAIowa, and the [National CASA Facebook page](http://www.facebook.com/CASAforChildren) at www.facebook.com/CASAforChildren and [Friends of Iowa CASA](http://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfIowaCASA) at www.facebook.com/FriendsOfIowaCASA.

Ask your friends to "LIKE" these pages by SHARING. "LIKE" and "SHARE" status updates or stories to help spread the word about CASA.

You can also suggest stories for us to post!



Twitter: Follow Iowa CASA on Twitter at www.twitter.com/CASAIowa.



YouTube: We have a YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/CASAIowa. The Iowa Recruitment Committee created some great videos from current volunteers. Please take a moment to check them out and even "SHARE" them!



Congrats
Jere Merrill
on the birth of
her first grandchild!

Maxwell James
Lunning
Born 11/23/2013
1:29 am
7 lbs 13 oz
20 1/2" long

Jere's daughter, Rachel
Lunning and husband,
Mason
live in
Shakopee
MN.



We can all make a difference in recruiting for our cause. Social Media allows you to "SHARE" our story, our cause, and our volunteer's successes.

The more "LIKES" and "SHARES", the more exposure, and the more potential volunteers.

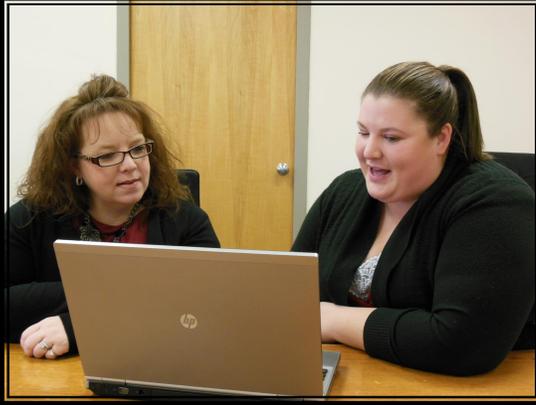


Teddy Bear Toss With the North Iowa Bulls

On December 14th the North Iowa Bulls did a "Teddy Bear Toss" with North Iowa CASA, Kidsnet and AL-YAD as beneficiaries. The teddy bears collected will be available to foster children through our programs. If you'd like to provide a teddy bear to a child or children that you represent, just let Suzan or Katy know.

Free tickets were provided to foster children through their CASA volunteers and Kidsnet so that these families may enjoy an evening at the game. A fun time was had by all and the Bulls won 6 to 4 over Granite City.





Guest Column Written by:

Nichole Benes,

Assistant County Attorney, Cerro Gordo County

We had begun to notice that the County Attorneys were doing things a bit differently in juvenile court, so we asked Cerro Gordo Assistant County Attorney, Nichole Benes to explain. Thanks Nichole, for your very thorough response!

The nature of the relationship between county attorneys and the Iowa Department of Human Services (IDHS) in child in need of assistance proceedings has changed in recent years. On November 30, 2007, the Supreme Court of Iowa issued an opinion in a case entitled *In re A.W.*, 741 N.W.2d 793 (2007) that addressed this issue.

Referring to language in Iowa Code § 232.90(2), the Court stated, “The department of human services is the county attorney’s “client” in CINA cases.” *Id.* at 801. At that time, Iowa Code § 232.90(2) read, “The county attorney shall represent the department in proceedings arising under this division.” The Court continued on to specifically declare, “The county attorney did not have the right to assert his independent vision of the state interest.” *Id.* at 803. The Court’s interpretation of Iowa Code § 232.90(2) was very different than what was occurring in many Iowa courtrooms.

From November 30, 2007, through June 30, 2013, *In re A.W.* dictated how county attorneys and IDHS worked together in juvenile court. From IDHS’s perspective, it was a positive development, as they gained a stronger voice in the courtroom and, to some extent, a layer of protection from conflict with other parties. Most importantly, they gained all of the benefits that come with attorney/client privilege.

From the perspective of most county attorneys, it was primarily a negative development. Attorneys have several duties, to their client, to other attorneys, and to the Court. Each is equally as important as the next. County attorneys have additional duties as prosecutors and as elected officials, but did not have clients until *In re A.W.* Many people and organizations involved in juvenile court, including the Iowa County Attorneys Association, advocated for a change in the law to address problems created by *In re A.W.* and the following are a few examples of those issues.

In one case, a county attorney was prosecuting an individual in a criminal case and simultaneously represented IDHS in a juvenile matter. In the juvenile hearing, IDHS was recommending the children go home with their father and the county attorney was advocating this position, outlining the father’s progress. In the criminal sentencing hearing, just a few days apart, the county attorney was recommending prison due to the father’s criminal history and the nature of the charges against him. The social worker attended the criminal hearing and testified on the father’s behalf. The county attorney in this situation has a duty to the public to prosecute crimes to the best of his ability, including making appropriate sentencing recommendations. He also has a duty to the Court and must be honest, never misleading. However, *In re A.W.* created a duty to his client, IDHS, and added attorney/client privilege. What should he have done? Send the father to prison against IDHS’s wishes? Recommend a lesser sentence because IDHS says he is safe to parent? It creates conflicts that are difficult, if not impossible, to resolve without falling short in at least one area.

An example from Cerro Gordo County involved parents who had made enough progress in services that IDHS was recommending the children be returned home. Based on the information IDHS had, both parents were doing well. However, the county attorney’s office had information that the mother was under investigation by the local drug task force for buying and selling narcotics. The duty to the public to prosecute crimes effectively dictated that the information not be shared with anyone, including IDHS. The duty to the Department, as a client with a clear interest in child safety, dictates that the information be revealed to support keeping the children out of the home.

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How Does Your Family Enjoy the Winter in Iowa?

Here are some fun family winter activities in North Iowa:

Ice Skating—North Iowa Ice Arena : Public Skate Saturday 10:00-11:30 AM, Sunday 2:30-4:30 PM

Open Hockey—North Iowa Ice Arena: see schedule at http://www.niisa.org/arena_schedule

Sledding Hills— East Park located at the intersection of 4th St. N.E. & North Caroline Ave. (MC)

Georgia-Hanford Park located at the intersection of 22nd St. S.E. & S. Mass. (MC)

Linn Grive Park, 518 Madison Street W., Rockwell, IA

Snowmobiling— Cerro Gordo trails can be found at http://www.visitmasoncityiowa.com/images/PDF/snowmobile_trail_map.pdf

Wilkinson Park, Shellrock River Greenbelt & Preserve (Rock Falls to Nora Springs)

Fun winter facts:

Figure Skating was the first winter sport included in the Olympic Games in 1908.

The earliest skate blades were made of animal bones (9th century), then wood (14th century), iron (17th century), and finally steel (1850's).

The first ice skates were found at the bottom of a Swiss lake. They were made in 3000 B.C. from cattle bones. James II of England and Louis XIV of France were two kings who fell in love with the sport and constructed large and expensive ice-skating arenas on their palace grounds.

5,000 year-old Egyptian tombs have pictures of field hockey games. Men's ice hockey made its Olympic debut in 1920, oddly enough in the Summer Olympics. It was moved to the Winter Olympics four years later. A women's team was added in 1998. The first organized game was played in Montreal, Canada by university students in 1875.

According to the "Guinness Book of World Records," the biggest snowflake on record occurred in Montana in 1887. It was eight inches by 15 inches.

The coldest temperature ever recorded on Earth was -128 degrees. The temperature was measured on Antarctica in 1983.

The World's largest snowman, according to the "Guinness Book of World Records," was built in Bethel, Maine standing 113 feet 7 inches tall breaking the previous record of 96 feet and 7 inches.



Winter Records

The record snowfall in a 24 hour period in Iowa occurred April 20th, 1918 when 24 inches of snow fell. Alaska holds the record with 78 inches on February 9th, 1963. Hawaii even experienced 6.5 inches of snow (1936) but Florida has had less at 4 inches (1954). <weatherquestions.com>



The temperature can get very cold in Iowa. The record is -47F and the most recent date this occurred was February 3rd 1996, but has occurred more than once. Alaska again holds the record at -80F (bbrrrrr). Florida has a record of -2F in 1899 and Hawaii a 12F in 1979. <usatoday.com>



Let it Snow! Let it Snow! Let it Snow!

Fun Things To Do With Snow



Snow Cream

Ingredients:

- 1 cup half and half or milk
- 1/3 to 1/2 cup granulated sugar (adjust to your taste)
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 to 6 cups clean, freshly fallen snow

Directions:

In a large bowl combine half and half, vanilla extract and sugar. Stir until sugar is dissolved, about 3 minutes.

Stir in snow, a cup at a time, until the ice cream magically forms! Freeze for several minutes if desired before serving.

Maple Snow Taffy

Ingredients:

- 1 cup maple syrup
- 1/4 cup salted butter
- clean snow (or, need be, ice cream)

Directions

In a medium-sized pot over medium heat, heat the syrup and butter together until the mixture reaches 220°F-235°F on a candy thermometer. If you don't have a candy thermometer, time it for about 5 minutes after it comes to a boil, and then pour a little onto a plate that's been waiting in the fridge: when the syrup is ready, it should thicken up into a soft taffy on the plate; if it doesn't, then cook it a minute or two longer.

Let the mixture cool for a couple of minutes, then pour it by the spoonful over bowls of clean snow (or ice cream) where it will harden into a sweet lump of maple insanity.



Kool-Aid Icees

- 1 C. Water
- 2 C. Sugar
- 1 package unsweetened Kool-Aid—flavor of your choice
- Snow

1. In a small pot combine the sugar, water and powdered juice packet.
2. Heat on high, stirring until the sugar and powdered mix have dissolved.
3. Cool before using.

Place in a bottle fitted with a pour spout and add flavoring to a bowl of snow.





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Guest Column Written by Nichole Benes, Assistant County Attorney Continued....

These examples illustrate the legal conundrum that county attorneys consistently faced for over five years. However, the Iowa Legislature passed a law that changed the language of Iowa Code § 232.90, effective July 1, 2013. Now, it is clear that the county attorney represents the State of Iowa. If any disagreements between IDHS and the county attorney occur, IDHS may request the attorney general represent them.

For the most part, this will not change how cases are handled in Cerro Gordo County. Since July, there have been a small number of occasions where the county attorney and the social worker assigned to a particular case disagreed. In these instances, the county attorney's office has notified IDHS of the disagreement. In approximately half, the disagreement was resolved through an open discussion prior to the next hearing. The new version of Iowa Code § 232.90 affected the disagreements that remained.

Going forward, when the county attorney's office and IDHS cannot reach an agreement on how to proceed, those present in the courtroom may notice a change in the discussion regarding the Department's recommendations. The county attorney will continue to articulate and advocate for the Department's recommendations, but will distinguish the State's recommendations, noting how and why the State disagreed with IDHS. This important change allows the county attorney to represent the Department's interests without IDHS as a client and without jeopardizing their ethical obligations to the Court, opposing counsel, or the public.

