



# Thanks for 35 Years of Volunteering

Judge David W. Soukup  
Retired Judge, CASA Founder

*Editor's Note: on January 10, 1977, Judge David Soukup organized the first team of court-appointed special advocates in King County, WA. In recognition of our movement's 35th anniversary, we are pleased to republish this piece written by Judge Soukup. This was originally published in the [30th Anniversary issue of The Connection magazine](#).*

Ina Hughes wrote a wonderful poem titled "Prayer for Children" in which she tells us of two kinds of children. First, she talks about those who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions, who sleep with the dog and bury goldfish, who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money, who cover themselves with band-aids and sing off-key, who squeeze toothpaste all over the sink, who slurp their soup. Then she describes those who never get dessert, who have no safe blankets to drag behind them, who watch their parents watch them die, who can't find any bread to steal, who don't have any rooms to clean up, whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser, whose monsters are real.

Over 35 years ago, while sitting as a judge in juvenile court, I realized that there was no one in the courtroom whose only job was to provide a voice for those children. Caseworkers have obligations to their agency, the

parent and others. Lawyers cannot investigate the facts and advocate for the mental health and social needs of the child. Our court was a court of general jurisdiction, so when I was not sitting at juvenile court I was trying civil cases, often involving large amounts of money or important legal issues. I would do the best job I could in deciding those cases and leave them at the courthouse when I went home. I wouldn't wake up at 4 a.m. worrying about my decision.

While sitting at juvenile court, I never got a night's sleep without waking to wonder if at least one decision I made that day had been the best for a child. It struck me that it might be possible to recruit and train volunteers to investigate a child's case so they could provide a voice for the child in those proceedings, proceedings which could affect their whole lives.

I had my bailiff call four or five people in the community who might be resources in recruiting volunteers to ask if they would meet for a brown bag lunch at juvenile court to discuss the idea. There were 50 people in the room when I walked in for that lunch. I thought, "This idea is going to work." It has. Tens of thousands of people like you, speaking up for hundreds of thousands of children, have proven that it does.

At one early meeting to discuss starting CASA, I was asked if I wasn't worried that volunteers would become emotionally involved with the children. I answered that if they didn't, we had the wrong volunteers. But for a long time I wondered who you marvelous people are who give so much of yourselves to children. Mercedes Lawry [former communications director at National CASA] then wrote her moving poem, "[The Advocate](#)," explaining what this is all about.

.....cont'd. on page 2

## Inside this issue:

35 Years cont'd.....	2
Baby News	2
Recipe	2
Reagan the Yellow Lab	3
Events	4



## .....cont'd. 35 Years of Volunteering

---

After I retired from the superior court bench, I became a volunteer in our program. It was an extraordinary experience. Both the hardest—and the best—thing I've ever done. But I realized that, although I had slept better as a judge knowing that CASA volunteers were speaking up for the children who needed their voices, the *volunteers* were now up at 4 a.m. worrying about those kids.

You are to be commended for your extraordinary commitment to children and for your sleepless nights. When Aaron Ruben, who was a dear friend and CASA volunteer in Los Angeles, received accolades for his work he would say, "I really get uncomfortable with too much praise. When people say 'Bless you for the work you're doing,' I say, 'Don't bless me. Get involved yourself or write CASA a check.'"

Keep passing that word on for another 35 years.



## Baby News.....

---



**Congrats to CASA Jo Stumo on the birth of her great granddaughter Rayna Winter Sanchez who was born September 5, 2012**

**Congrats to CASA Holly Brink on the birth of Lila Ann Brink on June 11th at 3:44 pm. She was 7 pounds, 2 ounces and 20 inches long**

## Graham Cracker Éclair "Cake"

---

15 Honey Maid Honey Grahams, broken in half (30 squares), divided  
1 pkg. (3.4 oz.) JELL-O Vanilla Flavor Instant Pudding  
1 1/2 cups cold milk  
1 tub (8 oz.) COOL WHIP Whipped Topping, thawed  
1 cup Baker's One Bowl Chocolate Frosting

ARRANGE 10 graham squares, slightly overlapping, on bottom of 8 inch square pan. Beat pudding mix and milk in large bowl with whisk 2 min. Let stand 5 min. Stir in Cool Whip.

SPREAD half the pudding mixture over graham squares in pan; cover with 10 of the remaining graham squares. Repeat layers.

REFRIGERATE 3 hours. Spread with Baker's One Bowl Chocolate Frosting.



# Reagan the Yellow Lab by Francine Barr

---



I never fails to amaze me what we can learn from dumb animals.

I have the silliest dog in the world. Reagan is her name, and she's a big yellow lab without a mean bone in her body, unless you get a little too close to her food. You see, Reagan (I didn't name her and she hasn't shared her political views with me yet) is a little on the chubby side and she loves her food when she's hungry. When she was given to me I was warned that she was a terror to small furry animals and that was just fine with me. I don't have cats and since she's been here all of the moles have either moved on or gone to the great mole hill in the sky, or Reagan's belly.

When she moved to my acreage she had the entire place to herself. All the outdoors from the grove to the road were hers to wander and hunt. Fast forward a year and suddenly she has to share the yard with a bunch of free range chickens, ducks and a goose. She got rough with a duck only one time, Bob the drake survived of course, but lost a couple feathers and maybe a little pride in his dogfight. After being scolded she learned to tolerate them. Smart girl, she knows these dumb feathered creatures are important to me.

It was only a matter of time before the chickens got brave and started stealing her food when she finished. I feared the day one brave rooster would meet his maker for being caught swiping the dog food, especially since Reagan's on a diet and her food is rationed. Again, the smart human gets a lesson on tolerance and sharing from a silly animal. Every morning I feed the chickens, fill up the watering troughs and pour

Reagan a portion of dog food. I step away with 3 hens and one brave rooster stalking Reagan just feet away waiting for her to leave the area so they can swipe what she leaves. They get close and she'd growl, then they'd back away a little, eyeing her bowl.

The other day I noticed that her bowl kept being moved around the yard, so I watched to see what was happening. Reagan was eating her food and the chickens were softly clucking at her. Instead of growling, she picked up her bowl Snoopy style, and walked away from the area so she could eat in peace, leaving a little spilled food on the ground for the chickens. Who would ever guess that a bird dog would willingly share her chow with a feathered friend? I guess we humans aren't so advanced, or maybe too advanced to know what my dog and birds learned so quickly. Sometimes, if you have enough, it's nice to share with your neighbor, just to be neighborly.

**THANK YOU to Farrer Foundation**  
Stebens Charitable Foundation  
FCNB Charitable Foundation  
Principal Foundation

## Events

---

10/6/12 Harvest Festival, Clear Lake; [info@clearlakeiowa.com](mailto:info@clearlakeiowa.com); 641-357-2159

10/27/12 Halloween Parade, Clear Lake; [clpr@netins.net](mailto:clpr@netins.net); 641-357-7010

12/1/12 Christmas by the Lake; [info@clearlakeiowa.com](mailto:info@clearlakeiowa.com); 641-357-2159

10/20/12 Artober Fest, Mason City, MacNider Art Museum; 421-3666

10/31/12 Trick or Treat night in the mall, Southbridge Mall, Mason City; 423-6688

## NORTH IOWA CASA

Phone: 641-421-3080

Fax: 641-421-3134

Email: [cocasa@co.cerro-gordo.ia.us](mailto:cocasa@co.cerro-gordo.ia.us)

[www.childadvocacy.gov](http://www.childadvocacy.gov)



# The Advocate

This is not about  
rescue, so as to feel good  
when the child lights up with a smile.  
This is not about  
the comfort of compassion.  
This is hard work,  
struggling with ripped families  
and children in clouds of pain,  
anger dancing around in their hearts  
in the turmoil of a world  
made crazy. This is caring,  
yes, but also what is just,  
what should be demanded.  
It takes love  
and a certain measure of courage.  
And in the simple act  
of person helping person,  
It becomes extraordinary.

— Mercedes Lawry  
Former communications director,  
National CASA



FALL BACK  
NOVEMBER 4

---

North Iowa CASA/ICAB  
Cerro Gordo County Courthouse  
220 North Washington Avenue  
Mason City, IA 50401

