

CASA of Cochise County

News & Views



Abby Dodge – CASA Coordinator ~ Lissete Borbon – Support Staff ~ Phone: 432-7521 Fax: 432-7247

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Abby Dodge

Coordinator Comments

It's hard to believe that it's already November – the holiday season is quickly approaching! Also, for all of you who have served our nation as a member of the armed forces, we thank you for your service.

As we near the stressful holiday season, I want to make sure and address the need for a support system. I'm not referring to a support system for the family with whom you are working – *I'm referring to a support system for you*. Volunteering as a Court Appointed Special Advocate can be very emotionally draining. It is so important to

Coordinator's Comments

make sure that you are taking care of your emotional health. I know it can be easy to neglect our own needs when focusing on others. Each of you are incredibly caring individuals, which is part of what helps you be so successful as CASAs. Please, as we enter this holiday season, make sure to take some time for yourselves and to focus on your needs.

On that note, we have a wonderful support group that meets the second Thursday of every month from 10 AM-12 PM. We meet at Lynn Vanderdasson's home in Hereford. This support group has grown into a group of about 10 people (depending on people's schedules). It's become a time for each CASA to share what they've been facing and have their concerns/feelings validated, receive advice when needed, or simply just vent. I've been attending these meetings since we started them back up in early 2015, and it's been wonderful being a part of such a great group. If you are able to attend this support group, I highly recommend it. I really think you'd benefit from attending.

There's also an evening support group that meets at LuRue Troyer's house in Sierra Vista. This group meets the last Tuesday of each month from 7-9 PM. It's currently a very small group, but they would love to have more

attendees. If you are unavailable during the day, please consider attending the evening support group!

We currently only have support groups meeting in Sierra Vista. As we continue to gain more advocates in the surrounding areas, I will be trying to organize more support group opportunities. If you have any suggestions for locations or dates/times for additional support group meetings, please let me know. If you can think of any other ways that CASA of Cochise County could help support you as you advocate for our dependent children, we are definitely open to suggestions.

As always, thank you all for your hard work and dedication as CASAs!

Making a First High School Dance Special

By **Mary Jacobs**, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

I'd like to give a shout-out to the CASA Council of Cochise County for their generous support of my teen girl's first opportunity to attend a high school dance. Through their financial contribution, J and I not only had a great time shopping together, but she was able to purchase a perfect dress, stylish shoes and great accessories that helped make her feel beautiful for Buena High School's Homecoming Dance in September.

It's easy to take for granted the experiences my daughter has in preparing for big school events like dances and proms. Many of you who have or are currently raising teens may do the same thing. A new outfit for virtually every special occasion is a must in my house. It's a tradition my daughter and I thoroughly enjoy, and I hope to continue it in some way even when she's away at college starting next year.

J's experiences are completely different. Not only were there no financial resources for such an indulgence, but she has been in situations that have excluded her participation in school activities over the years. The joy she received from trying on probably 30 different dresses one afternoon was memorable not just for her,

but for me as well. I'm sure she would have a hard time remembering when someone spent \$125 on her for something not in the "necessity" category.



Please remember to tap into the CASA Council of Cochise County for these special events and occasions for your CASA child. The hard work of the organization's volunteers to raise funds for foster

children in our county is so appreciated. And for smaller dollar amounts, the process couldn't be easier. Just make your request through Abby! She gave me approval the same day for this request.

Another that I submitted to Abby will be brought to the CASA Council board for approval soon - a laptop for J that she needs to succeed in school. If you can write a court report, I can assure you that you can write a few paragraphs justifying your request.

20 Activities to Do with a CASA Kid

By **Mary C. Blanchard**, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

1. When you take your young person somewhere and spend money, you will need a picture of your child to include when you send in your request to the CASA Council. Let your kid take a selfie with your camera. Live a little!!!! Encourage lots of selfies, and if you are really daring, take several of yourself as well. Let your CASA kid choose several and make copies.
2. When my two sisters behaved beautifully at our last visit (I didn't have to redirect them once), I told them we were going to celebrate. I proposed that we cheer as loud as we could for a block (there wasn't much traffic). They thought it was a great idea, and all three of us cheered at the top of our lungs for a block. It was a great success! Jumping outside the box is great, but know your CASA kid first. Some kids would be horrified at any off-the-wall behavior (some adults, too).
3. Riding in the car is a great place to talk. There is something about the motion of the car that causes a young person to open up.
4. But after a while sharing becomes overkill, and it is time for soothing music. **Let the young person choose the music.** Relax and enjoy. If enjoyment eludes you, then just relax. My teens love to talk about their music, and it really has great impact on them and great meaning. I have learned a lot when I have asked them to explain what it means. My grandchildren think I am cool when I have learned something from my CASA kid.
5. It is very important for kids to feel important. I was much more challenged on my cell phone before one of my girls worked with me. She taught me how to check if my phone was off or on to and what to do if I needed to change the setting. She also showed me how to disable the auto type feature when I told her it never, ever typed in what I wanted to say.
6. All my teens are responsible for getting us to our destination when I am driving. And the only time I let them use their cell phones is when they use their GPS to locate an unfamiliar place. My elementary age girls try hard, but they do get confused, and I never blame them if we get lost. Whereas, my teens know if we miss a left turn or drive by our destination, it is totally their fault.
7. If a young person is allowed in the kitchen, it is great fun if he/she is given a chance to prepare a meal. An understanding foster mother can allow this to happen. One young lady planned her meal over several visits (she served deluxe mac and cheese, salad, and dessert). She chose **the** recipe out of a dozen hopeful candidates, and she bought the ingredients and did everything from scratch, all by herself. Her meal was a total success (ingredients paid for by the CASA Council).
8. Craft or art projects are winners. I am in the negative zone in these areas, but every young person who is a budding artist or a model airplane enthusiast is delighted to have an audience. And our wonderful CASA Council funded these projects.
9. Movies and going out to eat are old standbys. I let the teens choose the movie (subject to my veto), but all ages get to choose the restaurant. I have learned that a hungry teenager may need some guidelines on price limits, and it is an easy and fun way to visit. I am happy to report that most of my CASA kids in recent years have quite acceptable table manners.

Continued on next page~

20 Activities to Do with a CASA Kid (Continued)

Fifteen years ago, about a third of my young people did not know that utensils are not kept on the table as the meal is being eaten. And I had to be really clear that an all-you-can-eat restaurant does not allow take-out.

10. I have found that many teens enjoy taking a friend along on an outing. It has worked very well for me, but I do let my teen know that I am part of the package. Girls invite a girl and boys invite a boy. Naturally foster parents and parents have to approve. No CASA is supposed to mention being a CASA. It is no problem unless the child tells everyone that you are the CASA. Make no comment if this happens--just let it float on by.
11. The Cove, the bowling alley, and the mall are old standbys. There are also special events in town, and school events are golden.
12. Very few of my CASA kids participate in extracurricular activities, but if they do, I make it a priority to go.
13. Tucson has The Children's Museum, The Arizona Sonora Desert Museum, the Pima Air and Space Museum, Old Tucson, the zoo and more.
14. Tucson offers roller skating, Golf N Stuff, Funtasticks Family Fun Park and more.
15. A professional baseball or football game is a long, long day, but fun for a true fan.
16. ***It is important to encourage your young person to provide ideas and suggestions. Appropriate choices should go to the head of the list.*** Most people have a good time if it is what they want to do.

17. If you happen to have a young person who does not encourage your company, start with a meal in a restaurant, and hopefully find other things that work. Remember you asked to advocate for this child. The child did not have any say in the matter. If it is a bumpy ride for you, remember it is not about you and focus on the best interest of your child.
18. Many of these activities will work beautifully for elementary age children. Pick and choose what works for your child.
19. Whatever you do with your child, bring your "A" game. Get into the moment and ***have fun***. If there are blips, be firm, fair, and consistent and move on.
20. Helping a young person hunt for a job is very important. Most young people rely on bikes, bus or walking. Driving from fast food to retail, and to other places that are hiring can be very time-consuming. If you have time, volunteer to drive.

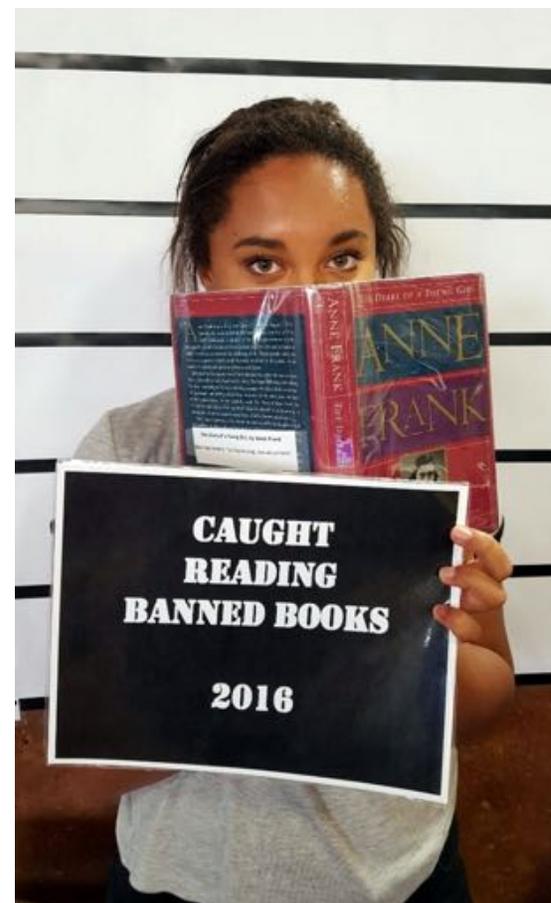
*I know it is wet and the sun is not sunny,
but we can have lots of good fun that is funny.*

— Dr. Seuss, The Cat in the Hat

We Love to Go to the Library!

By *Deb Scott, Cochise County CASA Coordinator*

We can sit and read in comfy chairs and just relax.



This week was National Banned Books Week and we got our mug shots taken at the Sierra Vista Library!!!

Deb and C

Ah Ha Events in the Life of a CASA Volunteer

By **Mary C. Blanchard**, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

1. The day my first CASA kid graduated from High School, and I blew a very loud whistle when she walked across the stage.
2. The day I was the birth coach for my 22-year-old CASA kid.
3. The day one of my teens gave me his prized drawing of a horse to show his appreciation for me being his CASA. He was in a lockdown RTC (Residential Treatment Center) at the time.
4. The day I reconnected with one of my former CASA kids, and she told me she is now a DCS case manager.
5. The day I got a call from an aged-out CASA kid asking for help getting into college.
6. The day one of my former CASA kids became the kinship foster mother for her sister.
7. The day the father of one of my CASA kids reported "*D is doing great because she has had two kids with the same father.*"
8. The day one of my very troubled boys graduated from 8th grade and got The Teachers Award for ***nicest student***. Everyone hugged him, so I knew it was real.
9. The day the mother of one of my girls told me the young lady was in college majoring in criminal justice because she planned on becoming a probation officer. She already had earned a cosmetology license.
10. The time one of my mothers and I and H&R Block proved that the IRS owed her \$17,000. It took us three weeks to gather up the information. The disconnect notices provided by the utility companies proved to be very valuable evidence that she lived in Sierra Vista.
11. The time my young man recited a passage from Romeo and Juliet in front of his 8th grade class. He learned his lines while he was at Mary's Mission, and for one rehearsal we had an audience consisting of all the boys who could find a chair to watch. It definitely reminded me of middle school. His teacher and I were greatly relieved when the young man gave the speech and saved his grade in English.

What life expects of us is that we celebrate.

— José Eduardo Agualusa
The Book of Chameleons

Ninth Sierra Vista Empty Bowls Project & Food Drive

Serving the Community, One Bowl at a Time

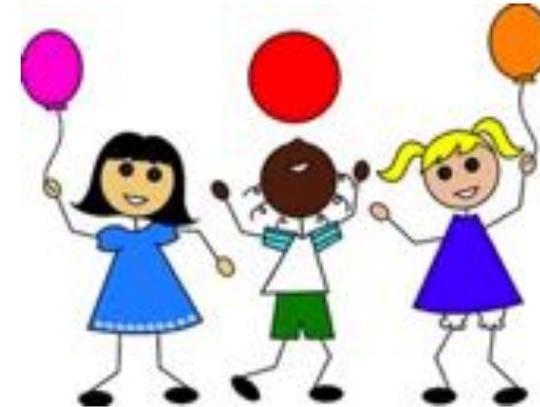


The Ninth Sierra Vista Empty Bowls Project & Food Drive will be held on Saturday, November 5, 2016 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Ethel H. Berger Center, 2950 E. Tacoma Street. Admission is free. Guests who make a donation of \$10 or more may choose a handcrafted bowl contributed by area potters as a thank you gift and as a reminder that there are always empty bowls in the world.

A simple meal will be served of soups and breads donated by local restaurants. Local musicians will be playing for guests' dining pleasure. There also will be a table of special bowls for a \$20 donation as well as a table of ceramic arts.

Proceeds will be donated to local agencies feeding hungry people in Cochise County.

Kudos



Mary Blanchard, Cochise County CASA Volunteer
FCRB, 9/14/2016

The Board recognizes the Court Appointed Special Advocate for her time and effort invested in advocating for the best interest of T, D, and M.

Lin Wright, Cochise County CASA Volunteer
FCRB Findings & Recommendations, 10/12/16

The Board appreciates the Court Appointed Special Advocate for her time and effort invested toward supporting E's best interest.

Ned Letto, Cochise County CASA Volunteer
CFT notes, 10/20/16

During a discussion regarding possible overload of services and demand on the child's time, the mother said she only wanted to keep Ned Letto.

CASA Support Groups

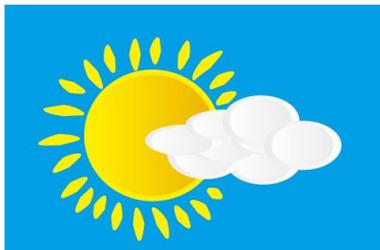
By **Mary C. Blanchard**, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

Both of our support groups use our meetings to get to know each other better, and both groups are committed to using our meetings as a trusted forum to discuss problems and search for solutions. Abby's article in our October Newsletter about adoption subsidy was to spotlight this topic after it came up at the Thursday morning support group.

Many of our adoptive parents qualify for the adoption subsidy when they adopt a child. It is our responsibility as advocates to know the requirements to qualify for the subsidy and to make sure it is approved before the adoption papers are signed. From time to time, the rules change, and we need to be aware any

changes. Just add "adoption subsidy" to your list of things to check off when your child is going to be adopted.

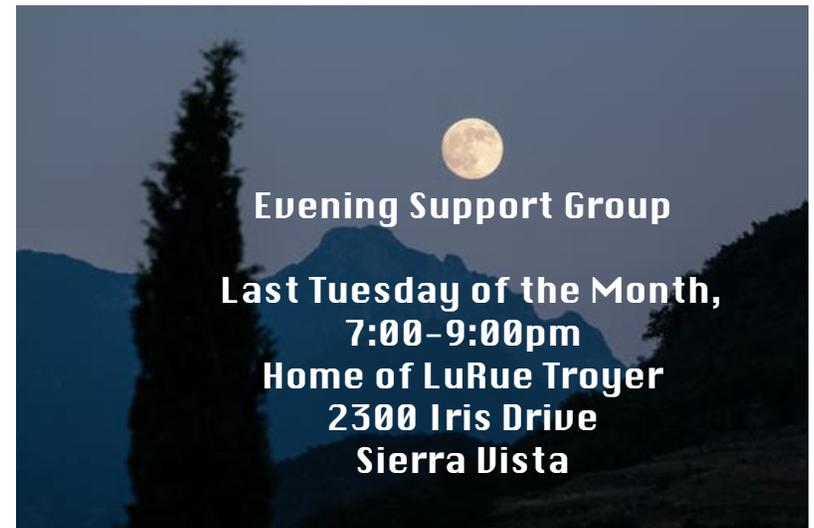
It's easy to do, and \$600 per month until the adopted child turns 18 is a tremendous help financially. Some families do not qualify if the child is determined to **not** meet the special needs requirement, so it is important to examine the details of the case.



Second Thursday of the Month

10:00am-12:00 noon

Home of Lynn Vanderdasson
5776 E. Perry Lane
Hereford, AZ 85615



Evening Support Group

Last Tuesday of the Month,

7:00-9:00pm

Home of LuRue Troyer

2300 Iris Drive

Sierra Vista

Report Writing Class

By **Mary C. Blanchard**, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

On Wednesday, October 12th, Abby gave a class on “Writing a Court Report”. I have written dozens of court reports, and I have been to at least four report writing classes, and this is the best training in court report writing that I have ever attended. I took notes and later used them to change some parts of the report I was working on. There was plenty of time to ask questions, and I asked questions about my particular areas of concern. Some of my questions had to do with our new format and Dashboard. Abby will be giving one of these trainings approximately every three or four months.

The case Abby chose is an excellent example of a typical case: it has a reasonably large cast of characters, and there is enough conflict to get our attention. It is a review hearing, and Abby briefly explained about the different types of hearings.

She gave examples of the difference between facts and opinions and emphasized that all the facts that are mentioned in the opinion and recommendation section must be somewhere in the assessments.

Abby cautioned us to make sure DCS is made aware of any major concerns before they appear in the report. I felt smug when she told us this because I had already e-mailed the DCS case manager, and she immediately took action and resolved the problem. I changed my report and added a commendation.

One of my favorite moments was when Abby told us our voice as an advocate for the child must be heard in our report. As the eyes and ears of the judge, we need to make sure we let the judge know exactly

what is going on. She encouraged us to be ourselves when we write our report and to use our natural writing style because we are the ones who need to bring the case to life.

This is an important training. I urge everyone to make it a priority to attend one of Abby’s report writing classes ASAP. It will refresh your skills and give you renewed enthusiasm when you write your court reports. Our CASA kids deserve to have your report provide the judge with enough information to help her make a ruling in the case.

A decorative floral border in a light brown color, featuring intricate scrollwork and small flower-like motifs. It frames the 'Anniversaries' section on the right side of the page.

Anniversaries

Juanita Adamson
11/29/11 – 5 years

Chris Charles-Hall
11/14/14 – 2 years

Bekki Ray
11/10/15 – 1 year

Melissa Avant
11/10/15 – 1 year

CASA of the Month!

Kathy Shaughnessy

It is my pleasure to announce the CASA of the Month for October.

Kathy has been with our program for a little over a year, and is on her second case. Kathy has found her niche advocating for a difficult age group – infants! Kathy enjoys working with our youngest population and does a phenomenal job helping these little ones achieve permanency. Although I haven't yet been able to see her in action, I have been informed that she has a great stage presence as well (she has starred in several productions by Bisbee's Obscure Productions).

Kathy is truly a great asset to our program. I've heard so many good things about Kathy from the adoptive mother on her first case, and the work that she put in helping get the little girl to permanency. In addition, she is always willing to help out, and she rarely complains – even when she cannot do anything in **CASAaz** due to a technical issue beyond our control! She also attends our daytime support group meetings, as long as her schedule allows.

Kathy, we really appreciate you and everything that you do to support your assigned children. Thank you!

October 2016



National Adoption Day

By **Mary C. Blanchard**, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

It is always a celebration when a child is adopted. When people make the decision to adopt a child and give that child a forever home, it is a huge commitment. Some of our CASA kids who need permanency find wonderful homes with adoptive parents who have jumped through endless hoops and have decided that they want to give a home to a child who needs a family.

November 19th is National Adoption Day. At 9:00am on Friday, November 18th at the Sierra Vista Police Department, there is a celebration to honor adoptive parents and their new children. One of my girls is being adopted on this day. Her adoptive parents are happy, her new sister and two brothers are happy, and I am happy. There are many children who need homes, and my girl is lucky enough to have found her forever home.



Adoption Day

By *Allison Hurtado*, CASA Marketing & Community Outreach Specialist, AZ Supreme Court

November is a time to celebrate families. Across the nation families are being brought together through National Adoption Day celebrations. National Adoption Day truly is a national effort. The goal is to raise awareness not only of the families who've been made whole through adoption but of the thousands of children still waiting for that opportunity. A coalition of National partners—Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, The Alliance for Children's Rights and Children's Action Network all sponsor National Adoption Day, usually celebrated the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

In 2015, 400 cities across the nation held an Adoption Day event and 4,000 children were adopted. This year more than 4,500 are expected to be finalized during November. Still, more than 100,000 children are still waiting to be adopted from the U.S. foster care system. The average child will wait three years to be adopted. Since 2000 more than 58,500 children have been adopted during National Adoption Day events.

National Adoption Day was created to decrease the number of children in foster care by connecting them with a loving, permanent family and to alleviate the backlog of pending adoptions. Research from the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption in 2012 revealed that there are many families interested in foster care adoption but more needs to be done to

motivate those families to act. Prospective parents don't need to be rich, married, own a home, or be of any certain race or religion to adopt.

The day is also a chance to dispel myths about children in foster care. To help with this, organizers are asking participants to share their adoption day stories on social media during the month of November using the hashtag #OneDayProject—to celebrate the one day they became a family.

Adoption Day events are held in several counties in Arizona including Yavapai, Cochise, Pinal, Pima and Maricopa counties. To find an Adoption Day event near you visit nationaladoptionday.org.

*There's nothing more important in this world
than caring for a child.*

— *Seth Adam Smith*
Rip Van Winkle and the Pumpkin Lantern

DCS Permanency Unit Focuses on Getting Kids out of Foster Care

By *Allison Hurtado*, CASA Marketing & Community Outreach Specialist, AZ Supreme Court

A new specialized unit at the Department of Child Safety is taking a closer look at cases that have been stalled in the system for too long.

The Permanency Planning Unit, based in Maricopa, Pinal and Pima counties, is a team of case workers with low caseloads focusing on making connections for kids who've been in care more than 15 months and who are between the ages of 10 and 16—difficult ages to find placements for. Each case that comes to the unit is completely dissected. The case managers work to locate parents, family members and friends to find solid connections for the child that will last past the age of 18.

“We go all the way back to the beginning,” said Cheryl Burton, permanency supervisor. “We pull up bio mom’s case file and start doing family locates. We do mobility mapping, tree of life, and timelines. We find family members or friends. We go back to old group homes they were in and see if they remember the kids and have any information. A lot of times they’ll say ‘Yeah, that kid was here for six months. When they were here, there was an Aunt Elizabeth who would come and visit’ and that person somehow fell off the map. We get back in touch with them.”

Burton said a lot of what the unit does is investigative work that the on-going case managers don’t have time for. The goal is not only to find permanency for the child but to find support if permanency doesn’t happen. Since the unit was formed in February of 2016 they’ve already had one adoption, transferred two kids to the Young Adult Program and have set up several guardianships.

The cases the unit deals with are often complicated and sometimes may seem uncomfortable to people familiar with the case.

“Because we are going back and finding parents, a lot of times CASA advocates may think ‘Wait a minute—their rights were severed—they were addicted to drugs,’” Burton said. “That’s true, but this kid has been in care for seven years now and when we find mom we might find she’s married, has another kid and is doing much better now. A lot of times because that door has been closed people are skeptical... We’ve found when we do make these connections the child’s behavior gets better. They have someone calling them now, sending care packages or even visiting.”

Safety is always a top priority but case managers in the permanency unit are also able to work with kids to make sure they protect themselves too. They try to teach kids to recognize when a situation is not safe and how to reach out to their other connections to help with the problem.

“When they do go back to cousin Mimi or mom Suzi, if there’s an altercation they know they can call Uncle Rick and go spend the night till they calm down,” Burton said. “You don’t need DCS. You can keep yourself safe.”

The average case load in the permanency unit is just 16 kids. The goal is always to keep the case load under 25. Cases are sent to the unit based on the child’s age and the amount of time they’ve been in care.

“We want advocates to know the department does have a plan, we are working hard and we are finding connections for these children to get them out of care,” Burton said. “We don’t want any child to age out of care.”

CCCC, Inc

Cochise County Council for CASA, Inc

is a nonprofit organization that raises funds to the unmet needs of abused neglected and abandoned children in the CASA of Cochise County Program. The primary focus is to ensure the educational progress of CASA children through tutoring and scholarships. In addition the council provides clothing, toys and personal items.

If your CASA child/youth has an unmet need, consider the Cochise County Council for CASA to help!!

Call your CASA Coordinator at 432-7521 OR

Send an email to Adodge@courts.az.gov



Bisbee's Obscure Productions

with Central School Project
presents



MURDER, MARGARET AND ME

by Phillip Meeks

Margaret Rutherford, Agatha Christie, secrets, mysteries

Fridays & Saturdays

November 4, 5, 11 & 12, 2016 at 7:30 pm

Sundays: November 6 & 13 at 3:00 pm

Central School Project, 43 Howell Avenue, Old Bisbee

Tickets:

\$10 in advance

Finders Keepers on Main St., Mimosa Market on the Gulch

by mail from BOP • call for credit card sales +\$1 each

\$12 for adults & \$6 for students and children



Bisbee's Obscure Productions
PO Box 277, Bisbee AZ 85603
520.366.7257
theaterbisbee@gmail.com

Enjoy watching Cochise County CASA Volunteer Kathy Shaughnessy in her role as Margaret Rutherford, the actress who played Agatha Christie!

NOVEMBER 2016						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 All Saint's Day	2 All Soul's Day	3 Sandwich Day	4	5
6 Marooned Without a Compass Day	7	8 General Election Day	9	10	11 Veteran's Day <i>County Offices Closed</i>	12
13	14 World Diabetes Day	15	16	17 Homemade Bread Day	18 National Adoption Day Celebration @ SVPD at 9AM.	19 National Adoption Day
20	21 Lin W. 	22 Ned: Court Report due for F case.	23	24  <i>County Offices Closed</i>	25	26 Shopping Reminder Day
27	28 French Toast Day	29	30 Stay at Home Because You Are Well Day			

Clarification on the Arizona Adoption Subsidy

By **Abby Dodge**, Cochise County CASA Coordinator

Last month's newsletter featured information about the Adoption Subsidy Program here in Arizona. I want to clarify something very important about this Adoption Subsidy Program. The information states:

"The Adoption Subsidy Program provides post adoption support for children with special needs who are adopted from foster care."

*What is important to understand about this statement, is that for the purposes of the Adoption Subsidy Program only, **the term 'special needs' doesn't have the same meaning that we are used to.***

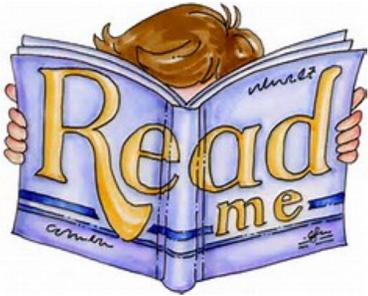
For the purposes of the Adoption Subsidy Program, a child is considered to have special needs and thus be eligible for the subsidy if **any** of the following are true:

- physical, mental or developmental disability;
- emotional disturbance;
- high risk of physical or mental disease that may result in a debilitating condition;
- high risk of developmental disability that may result in a debilitating condition;
- age six or older at the time of application for adoption subsidy;
- sibling relationship when such factor impedes the child's adoptive placement;
- racial or ethnic factors when such factor(s) impede the child's adoptive placement;

- high risk of severe emotional disturbance if removed from the care of the child's foster parent or relative as diagnosed by a psychiatrist or psychologist.

The first four items on this list go along with the definition we are used to seeing for special needs. **However, it is important to understand that a child who is age six or older at the time of application for adoption subsidy is considered to have special needs. In addition, two or more siblings are being adopted into the same home, they are also considered to have special needs. These children can be perfectly healthy with no physical, mental, or developmental disabilities (or risk of disabilities) and still be eligible for the adoption subsidy.**

I hope that this information clears up any confusion that anyone had from the article last month!



Title 8 Guardianship Subsidy

FROM THE PAGES

From the Arizona Department of Child Safety

Guardianship Subsidy is available to those caregivers who have been appointed as the permanent guardian of a child who is a ward of the court and in foster care pursuant to A.R.S. § 8-872. These are children who cannot return home to birth parents and for whom adoption has been ruled out as a possible alternative.

How is guardianship different from adoption?

Adoption requires the complete termination of the birth parents' rights. Guardianship generally allows birth parents to maintain reasonable visitation with the child (unless the court will not allow visitation).

Guardianship is a decision that concerns the whole family. Guardianship should be considered only when the alternatives of returning home or adoption are not in the best interests of the child. Discuss this decision with the DCS Child Safety Specialist, family, friends, and—most importantly—with the child.

What decisions can a guardian make for the child?

A guardian is assigned the care, custody and supervision of a child by the court. This means the guardian has rights and responsibilities in making important decisions affecting the life, education and development of the child. A guardian may make decisions in the child's best interest regarding marriage, adoption of the child, consent to medical treatment or other professional care.

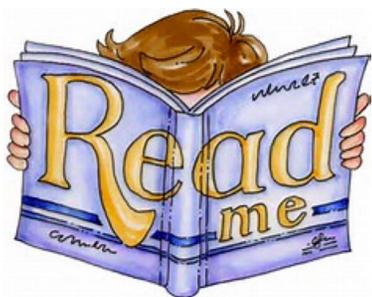
Why a guardianship subsidy?

Guardianship subsidy helps a child's legal guardian care for the child. It enables the child to remain or be placed with caregivers who are committed to that child's well-being. It offers an alternative when adoption is not an option.

Who is eligible for guardianship subsidy?

Those who wish to participate in the guardianship subsidy program must be appointed as the permanent guardian of a child who is a ward of the court and in foster care pursuant to A.R.S. § 8-872. The application process may begin prior to the appointment of guardianship by the court.

Continued on next page~



Title 8 Guardianship Subsidy (Continued)

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Subsidy payments cannot start until:

- the Letter or Order appointing the guardian has been received, and
- the guardian has applied for any state and federal benefits for which the child may be eligible.

How much is the subsidy?

Guardianship subsidy is a monthly payment to the caregiver to assist with the expenses of caring for the child. The department shall determine the amount of the subsidy the child will receive, which shall not exceed the maintenance allowable for adoption subsidy.

If the child receives state or federal benefits, the amount of those benefits received will be deducted from the subsidy rate.

What about medical care?

Guardianship subsidy is strictly a monthly payment to the guardian. There are no other services provided. Medical and dental care for the child may be available through AHCCCS.

To apply for AHCCCS benefits for a child, contact your local DES office. For AHCCCS eligibility information call 1-800-352-8401 (statewide) or 602-542-9935 (Phoenix), or visit www.azdes.gov.

What am I required to do if I receive guardianship subsidy?

The permanent guardian must cooperate with the department in the annual review process, and notify the department of any changes.

How long does guardianship subsidy last?

The department will discontinue guardianship subsidy if:

- the permanent guardianship terminates,
- the child dies or does not reside with the permanent guardian,
or
- the child reaches age 18.

How can I apply for guardianship subsidy?

Applications for guardianship subsidy can be obtained through the Department.

If you have questions about guardianship subsidy, please call the Guardianship Subsidy Specialist at 602-771-6470.

The Dragoos in Yellowstone Park!



Published in the Sierra Vista Herald!

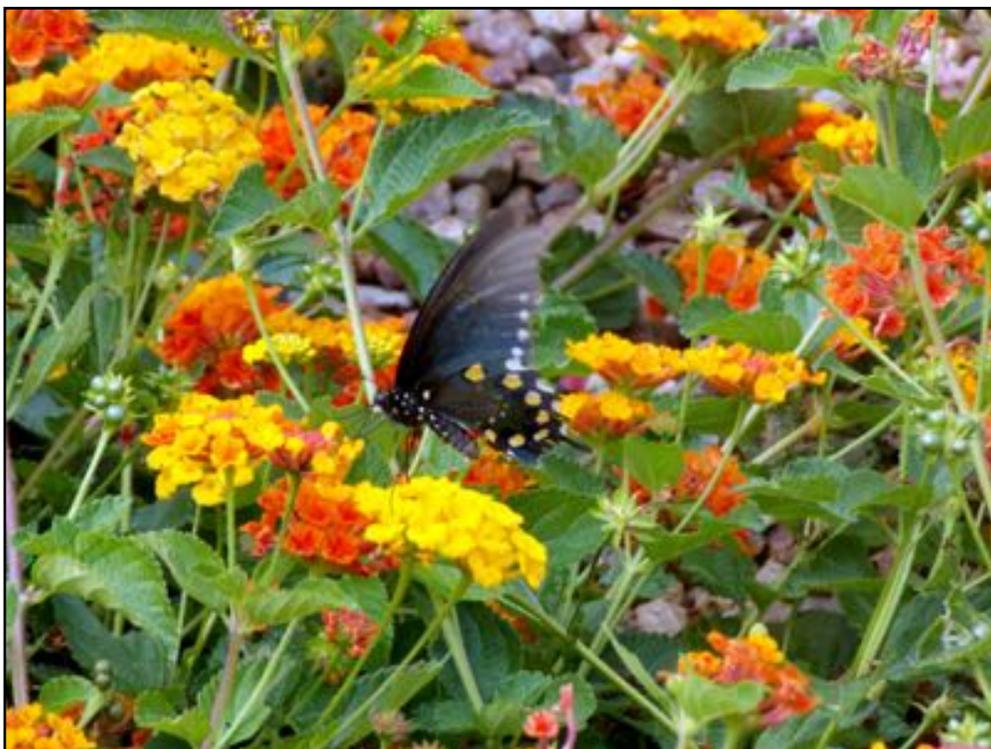


Photo by Ned Letto, Cochise County CASA Volunteer



Photo by Zanetta Boughan, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

Haunted House



Sponsored by Fraternal Order of Police in conjunction with the Cochise County Council for CASA, Inc, Boys & Girls Club of Sierra Vista, NAMI, San Pedro Kiwanis, Just Kids Inc. & Fry Fire District

