

## Intruder Alert-- Physical Security

**Editors Note:** This article was written before the tragic shooting death of Rainier Police Chief Ralph Painter on January 5, 2011. We send our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Chief Painter and to the community of Rainier.

By Burt Tschache

I've written much about security software in this column. There is another aspect to computer security not discussed a great deal outside of corporate IT offices and that is physical security. You can have the finest security suite on the planet, but if you leave a computer somewhere insecure, that computer will be gone before you know it.

If the computer is stolen, notify the police or 911. If the computer is in a burning building, call the fire department or 911. If the computer has injured you, contact the paramedics or 911, and find another line of work, immediately if not sooner.

What if you called for the police and they couldn't come? How about asking for help from the fire department or paramedics and they couldn't make it either? What if no one of authority and ability was able to come to your assistance in your time of need? You would probably feel more than a little let down, you would likely get very angry and disgusted.

Physical security comes at a dear price. In 2010, there were 160 law enforcement officers, 85 firefighters and 39 EMT's killed in the line of duty.<sup>1</sup> How many of us have a job description entry stating you may be killed by some half-crazed, slobbering doofus who has no moral compass and does not even understand the concept? Well, perhaps the entry in the job description is not that extreme, but it cannot be far from the truth.

Sgt. Mike Kay<sup>2</sup> posted a link to *The Officer Down Memorial Page* at <http://www.odmp.org/> on Facebook that really made me stop and think. It

puts a face to the names and mentions the family members left behind. I have a few questions: "How did we come to this? How did we as a country stoop so low as to kill 284 men and women, sworn to protect our physical security, when they were doing just that, their jobs?"

When I was a lad, I was taught respect for police, firemen and EMT's. I found that if you show respect to someone, they will generally respond in kind. There is always the exception that proves the rule, but I have found that respect goes a long way in life, where the lack of it gets you nowhere.

My dad told me, "Everyone puts on their pants one leg at a time." I have kept that in mind while talking with or writing to a large number of public servants from Vernonia to Washington, D.C. We are all pretty much the same in our basic wants and needs in life. I believe that we all have more in common than in difference.

So, what in the name of Sam Hill does this have to do with Computer

Security? Just this, if you want the best physical security for your computer, keep a close eye on it or lock it up. If an event occurs akin to those mentioned at the beginning of the column, you had best hope that the physical security provided by our police, firemen and EMT's is at your disposal when you need it or you'll be swimming Big Muddy without a vest.

Show our first responders some love or at least some respect. They are the fine line between chaos and order, and for that alone, they deserve both. And with that, I want to wish Heidi and Mike, the unknowing inspirations for this article, the very best in their long lives ahead.

Be Safe Out There . . .

*Burt Tschache is the owner of B&B Computing in Vernonia. He can be reached at [bnb998@msn.com](mailto:bnb998@msn.com) or (503) 429-0817.*

<sup>1</sup> Figures thanks to Heidi Lindsay.  
<sup>2</sup> Thanks, Mike.

## New CASA Group Forms to Advocate For Abused and Neglected Children

CASA for Kids, Inc. has formed to carry on the work of Court Appointed Special Advocates in Columbia County. CASAs (or Court Appointed Special Advocates) are trained volunteers appointed by a judge to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children in juvenile court.

The main job of CASA volunteers is to advocate for foster children to have a safe and loving permanent home. "CASAs ensure that these children do not fall through the cracks," noted CASA for Kids Executive Director Kathryn Bourn. "And given the budget cuts to social services, those cracks are becoming chasms." Meanwhile, child abuse is on the rise. In Columbia County, the rate of "founded" abuse and neglect reports increased 68 percent between 2007 and 2009.

In Oregon, every child with a pending juvenile-dependency case is entitled to have a CASA volunteer. "Unfortunately, in Columbia County, we don't have nearly enough volunteers to serve all the children," Bourn said. CASA for Kids currently serves about 15 percent of children in the foster-care system.

In order to serve all the children, CASA for Kids needs to train an additional 50 to 75 volunteers. Most CASA volunteers advocate for just one child or one sibling group. CASA for Kids will offer a new CASA training, starting Feb. 24. Training topics include child abuse, substance abuse, domestic violence, cultural competency issues, speaking in court, role of DHS, poverty, and CASA guidelines. Volunteers receive 30 hours of new CASA training, write a sample court report, and observe experienced CASAs in court before getting assigned a case of their own.

CASA volunteers come from all walks of life, ethnic groups and educational backgrounds. "What they have in common is tenacity and compassion for children," Bourn said.

Currently, 12 CASA volunteers advocate for 37 children. With more than 260 new juvenile dependency cases have been filed in Columbia County Circuit Court this year, that leaves 223 children without a CASA. Not all of those children wind up in foster care; some remain in their family home while their parents or other family members work with the Department of Human Services. Either way, however, having a CASA volunteer to advocate for the child is

extremely important.

Studies have shown that children with a CASA spend less time "in the system." They either return to their parents or are adopted more quickly than children who do not have CASAs. Children with CASAs also receive more services to assist them with their educational, medical and psychological needs. When a CASA advocates for the child, the child tends to have more contact with extended family members too.

CASA advocacy is a unique volunteer role. While juvenile case information is highly confidential, as parties to the case, CASAs receive child protection reports and medical, counseling and school records. CASAs meet regularly with the children, their biological and foster parents, caseworkers, the child's attorney, other family members, and community service providers. Once appointed, CASAs go to court and participate in hearings and settlement negotiations at all phases of the case. They make their own report to the court and also can call witnesses of their own or question other parties' witnesses.

Under state law, the CASA's role is to:

- **Investigate** all relevant information about the case;

- **Advocate** for the child, ensuring that all relevant facts are brought before the court;

- **Facilitate** and negotiate to ensure that the court, Department of Human Services, and the child's attorney fulfill their obligations to the child in a timely manner;

- **Monitor** all court orders to ensure compliance and to bring to the court's attention any change in circumstances that may require a modification of the court's order.

CASAs make a 1 1/2- to two-year commitment so that they advocate for the child or siblings until the end of the case. "Often, a CASA is the one consistent presence in the child's life during that time period," said Bourn. Caseworkers, therapists, and even foster families often change during that timeframe.

To learn more about volunteering, people can visit the CASA for Kids website at [www.casaforkidsinc.org](http://www.casaforkidsinc.org) or contact CASA for Kids at 503-366-4133 or [info@casaforkidsinc.org](mailto:info@casaforkidsinc.org).



U.S. 26 (Sunset Highway)  
Dennis L. Edwards Tunnel  
Project

## Public Meeting

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is beginning construction in January on a project to improve the U.S. 26 Dennis Edwards Tunnel 34 miles west of Portland. ODOT invites the community to meet the team and learn more about the project.

**Thursday, January 13**  
**4:30—6:30 pm**  
**Banks Christian Academy**  
**22785 Northwest Fischer Rd.**  
**Buxton, OR**

**For more information, visit:**  
[www.DennisEdwardsTunnel.org](http://www.DennisEdwardsTunnel.org)  
**Or contact:** Lili Boicourt, ODOT Community Affairs  
503-731-8247 • [Lili.D.Boicourt@odot.state.or.us](mailto:Lili.D.Boicourt@odot.state.or.us)

