



Eight new child advocates sworn in

Judge Ted E. Grove swore in eight new Court Appointed Special Advocates on Thursday, March 17. "These new CASA advocates will dramatically increase CASA for Kids, Inc.'s ability to serve abused and neglected children in Columbia County," said executive director Kathryn Bourn.

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) are trained volunteers appointed by a judge to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children in juvenile court. The new CASA advocates underwent more than 30 hours of training focusing on the issues that bring children into the foster-care system (parental substance abuse, domestic violence, physical abuse and sexual abuse), and learned how to advocate for children.

"We're especially excited that two couples have decided to volunteer," said CASA supervisor Sara Bonnell. CASA advocates Tom and Marjorie Frazier of Deer Island and Robin and Gordon Scherdnik of St. Helens plan to work on their cases as couples. "Encouraging men to volunteer as CASAs can be challenging, but their experience and perspectives are so important," Bonnell added.

The other new CASA advocates are Rajean Lakson of Deer Island, Yvonne Pea of Warren, Linda Rusch of St. Helens, and Donna Holmes of Scappoose.

CASA advocates work with children, biological parents, siblings, relatives, caseworkers, foster families, attorneys, teachers, counselors and other

treatment providers to ensure that the children's best interests are identified and met. The newly sworn-in CASA advocates brings the total program volunteers to 19. The program currently serves 35 children in the foster-care system, and Bourn anticipates that the new CASA advocates will serve an additional 20 to 25 children.

Each CASA is appointed to advocate for a single child or sibling group. CASA advocates work to ensure that children either return home to their parents or find a permanent family as quickly as possible, while also ensuring that their educational, medical, mental health and cultural needs are met.

To support the new and ongoing advocates, CASA for Kids, Inc. is kicking off an Adopt a CASA program. While CASA for Kids receives some money from the State of Oregon and from foundations, the organization needs significant support from the community. CASA for Kids, Inc. needs to raise \$3,000 a month to make up the difference between state and foundation funds and its basic operating expenses. Businesses and individuals can adopt a CASA for the full year for \$1,428 or adopt for a month, either on a continuing or one-time basis, for \$119 a month. The adoption donation covers the costs of ongoing staff supervision, background check, and training. For more information on how to adopt a CASA, contact executive director Kathryn Bourn at 503-366-4133 or director@casaforkid.org.

One of the many fishers who enjoyed the Free Fishing Derby sponsored by the Pioneer Baptist Fellowship.

Pet of the Month

Columbia Humane Society in St. Helens has a variety of wonderful pets available for adoption. Find the pet that's right for you in the shelter at 2084 Oregon Street. Phone 503-397-4353
Open Mon - Fri 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, 11 am. to 5 pm.



Petunia is about 7 months old. She is a super-sweet girl who just wants to play, run, climb, snuggle and live her life to the fullest. She gets along well with other cats and dogs, and is great with kids. She was kept as an indoor and outdoor cat. Petunia is a happy little cat who deserves a person of her own, Could you be her person?

The Columbia Humane Society is a No-Kill non-profit shelter dedicated to helping friends find each other since 1985.

This Pet of the Month is Sponsored by:

Senator Betsy Johnson

Action Ads

INEXPENSIVE - EFFECTIVE

503-429-9410

\$4.50 for the first 10 words, then just

10¢ for each additional word

Free Fishing Derby a success

The Vernonia Community Free Fishing Derby, presented by Pioneer Baptist Fellowship, saw over 86 participants, aged four to 56 years of age. One family came all the way from McMinnville.

Approximately \$2,500 in prizes were given away, including tackle packages and rod and reel sets from ultra-light to steelhead.

Tons of cookies were eaten before, during and after the event, washed down by coffee or hot chocolate (a case of hot chocolate was used).

Said Pastor John Cahill of the event, it was held "in the spirit of Wells Oviatt, who shared his love of fishing with so many."