

# COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES

DECEMBER 2017

Our office will be closed on Friday December 22nd and Monday December 25th in observance of the Christmas Holiday. In addition, we will be closed Monday January 1st in observance of the New Year.

Happy December

Birthday!!



Trish Foxall - 2nd

Enjoy Your Special Day!

Please plan accordingly so you can check in on your CASA kids right before and after the Christmas Holiday. This might be a difficult time of year for some of these kids and they will appreciate seeing familiar faces.



Congratulations to our new CASA graduates!

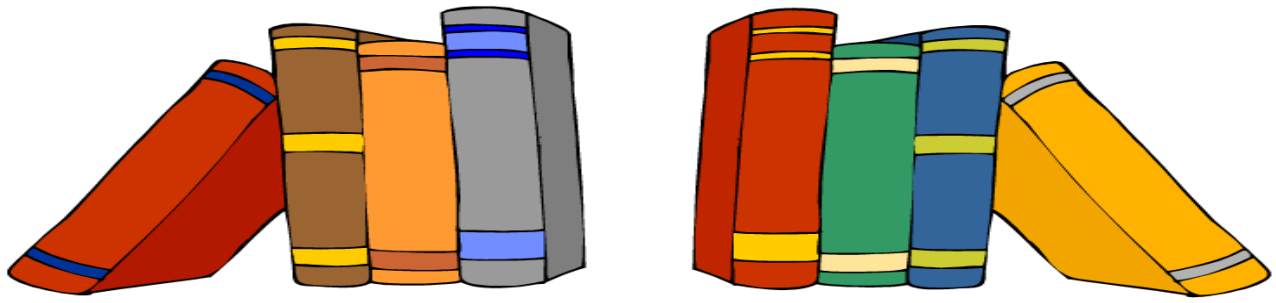
**Karen Elliott**  
**Jessica Erickson**  
**Vicki Laack**  
**Vickie Mims**  
**Bonnie Poling**  
**Jeanne Smith**  
**Donna Sutton**

Looking ahead to 2018, the **January Noon-Networking will be on the 11th. We will be hosting Jerry Gille from the Quincy Housing Authority.** Jerry has been in this field for a number of years and has a wealth of information. You won't want to miss and we look forward to seeing you all!

*"Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love."*

*~Martin Luther King Jr.*

(OVER)



As promised, a new book review! Garbage Bag Suitcase is now available in our CASA Library and is available for check-out! The CASA Staff heard the author speak at the most recent Illinois CASA Conference. Come by and pick up a copy!

Garbage Bag Suitcase is the true story of Shenandoah Chefalo's wholly dysfunctional journey through a childhood with neglectful, drug-and alcohol addicted parents. She endured numerous moves in the middle of the night with just minutes to pack, multiple changes in schools, hunger, cruelty, and loneliness.

Finally at the age of 13, Shen had had enough. After being abandoned by her mother for months at her grandmother's retirement community, she asked to be put into foster care. Surely she would fare better at a stable home than living with her mother? It turns out that it was not the storybook ending she had hoped for. With foster parents more interested in the income received by housing a foster child, Shen was once again neglected emotionally. The money she earned working at the local grocery store was taken by her foster parents to "cover her expenses." When a car accident lands her in the hospital with grave injuries and no one came to visit her during her three-week stay, she realizes she is truly all alone in the world.

Overcoming her many adversities, Shen became part of the 3% of all foster care children who get into college, and the 1% who graduate. She became a successful businesswoman, got married, and had a daughter. Despite her numerous achievements in life though, she still suffers from the long-term effects of neglect, and the coping skills that she adapted in her childhood are not always productive in her adult life.

Garbage Bag Suitcase is not only the inspiring and hair-raising story of one woman's journey to overcome her desolate childhood, but it also presents grass-root solutions on how to revamp the broken foster care system.

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