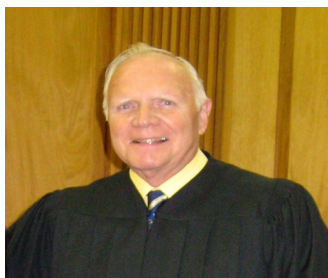


# THE CASA MONTHLY

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## THE HONORABLE PETER J. NEMETH



Judge Peter J. Nemeth will be retiring on December 31, 2012. He became Judge on March 15, 1993, and was elected to three terms, serving almost 20 years on the bench. He had previously served on the South Bend City Council (1972-1976) and as Mayor of the City of South Bend (1976-1980).

Judge Nemeth views his retirement as a change of course or a moving on. "While I will be retiring from the Court, I plan on serving of *counsel* with the law firm of Nemeth, Feeney and Masters as well as assisting my son, Andrew, in his commercial real estate and development business, Andrew Nemeth Properties", said Nemeth. "I also plan on doing some mediation work particularly in the probate area".

The Judge also indicated that he was looking forward to spending more time with his 14 grandchildren.

The CASA staff and volunteers are sincerely grateful

to Judge Nemeth for his many accomplishments in our community and his contribution to the CASA Program of St. Joseph County. Congratulations to Judge Nemeth and best wishes for many happy years of retirement!



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<a href="#"><u>BIRTHDAYS: DECEMBER</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>2</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>CALENDAR OF EVENTS: DECEMBER</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>2</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>CASA HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>2</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>CASA SPOTLIGHT</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>2</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>NEWSLETTER IDEAS</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>2</u></a>

## WHY I WANT A CASA VOLUNTEER FOR EVERY CHILD



*In June, Judge Joyce Williams Warren, 20th Division Circuit Court, AR, was named 2012 National CASA Judge of the Year for her support of the CASA*

*cause and efforts to improve the lives of abused and neglected children. She was nominated by the Pulaski County CASA program in Little Rock.*

*Judge Warren turns the spotlight on CASA volunteers, sharing words of admiration for advocates' drive, skills and contributions, and describing why she thinks every abused and neglected child should have a CASA volunteer.*

**"I want a CASA for every child.** It is a goal that I've had since I started. I love CASA volunteers because they go out of their way to stay for the life of the case, through thick and thin, and do the best they can to ensure that needed services are provided and that children get out of the foster care

system. Caseworkers can be incredibly talented but are often overworked. Appointed attorneys and others may change. The CASA volunteer is often the one committed and caring adult who is looking out for a child's best interests.

I get a lot of CASA volunteers before me—but not as many as I would love! These volunteers are driven from within—from the core of their being—to improve the lives of children. They give their time, dedication and energy to the work because they love it, because they know that it is important and because they care about people. They are there for the children, not for accolades or awards.

CASA volunteers tackle tough situations and issues, and they follow through. Even when it gets really bad, and really frustrating, and really disheartening, they keep going because it's their mission—to improve the lives of children who are abused and

neglected and get them out of the court system, back home or into an alternate home that is safe, permanent and appropriate to them.

A good CASA volunteer is objective and fair, willing to challenge systems that aren't working, open-minded, eager to learn, and able to talk with others in an appropriate way even when they are disagreeing. CASA volunteers are honest and determined. And I must add that they have common sense, because that goes a long way.

As a result of all of these things—their drive, passion, hard work, and the dedication and information that CASA volunteers bring to bear on these cases—I am able to make the best decisions for the children that come before me. I could not do my job as well as I do without them."

Federal budget cuts are threatening CASA program's ability to ensure that

abused and neglected children have a caring volunteer standing by their side, speaking up for their best interests and giving them hope for the future. Our approach works. When we can reach a child in need, his or her life changes—for the better. But for every foster child with a CASA volunteer, two others go it alone.

The St. Joseph County CASA Program is currently recruiting for the **Winter Training Session that begins in January 8, 2013**, and we are encouraging every single CASA volunteer to recruit at least one more CASA volunteer. If we are successful, this will help us double our volunteer numbers and ultimately advocate for more children in the foster care system. All active CASA volunteers should contact the CASA Office and request the Each One Reach One business cards, so that you can begin spreading the word and helping us recruit new volunteers. Call (574) 233 -2272 for more information.

## THE MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT: RACHEL H.



Since becoming a CASA in 2010, Rachel has made an incredible difference in the lives of the three children she has represented, one of whom was adopted last December. She has advocated

tirelessly for these kids and finds the work extremely personally rewarding. At the same time, she has found navigating the system to be an “eye-opening experience” and has learned first-hand the importance of CASA in the legal process, with judges giving serious consideration to her rec-

ommendations and opinions. Rachel works in University Communications at Notre Dame and feels fortunate to be in an atmosphere that supports and encourages her commitment to service. She is a dedicated aunt and has three “fur babies” at home – two labs, Coco and Sydney; and a cat named Jessica.

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday from  
*The Monthly!*



Carol B.  
Tom B.  
Billie Jean C.  
Kelly G.  
Connie J.  
Angela L.  
Tammela M.  
Diana N.  
Jill S.  
Reva Cheri U.  
Yolanda Y-S.

## CALLING ALL CREATIVE MINDS!!!

We are revamping our newsletter for the New Year and would love your input! New name, new stories, and new ideas are all up for consideration. Please email your ideas to Stephanie at [casa@jjconline.org](mailto:casa@jjconline.org) as soon as possible.

## CASA Holiday Open House

On Friday, December 21, 2012, the CASA office will be holding a Holiday Open House for volunteers to mingle with each other and CASA staff.



Please stop by the CASA office for donuts and coffee....and if you have the courage....wear your ugliest holiday sweater or sweat shirt! You could be the recipient of a really cool prize! We will announce the winner in the

January newsletter. Hetty C. was the winner of last year's ugliest holiday sweater contest!

Our office hours on December 21, will be 8:30am to

4:30pm.

If you plan on attending please contact the office at 235-5375 so we can be assured there is an ample supply of goodies.

Best wishes this holiday season! We look forward to seeing each of you!

## CASA OF SJC ON THE WEB

[WWW.SJCCASA.ORG](http://WWW.SJCCASA.ORG)

[FACEBOOK](#)  
[TWITTER](#)



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS: DECEMBER

- ◆ Need to get your in-service hours completed before the end of the calendar year? Check out the volunteer section on the [CASA web site](#).
- ◆ Please submit your [monthly hours + reports](#) to your supervisor.
- ◆ Any updates, book reviews, or questions for the CASA staff? Send them to [casa@jjconline.org](mailto:casa@jjconline.org) and they'll be featured in future *CASA Monthly* Newsletters!
- ◆ CASA Holiday Open House is December 21, 2012, join us for coffee, donuts and all the ugly sweaters you can take.
- ◆ The CASA office will be closed December 24th & 25th to celebrate the Christmas Holiday!
- ◆ Judge Nemeth's last day as St. Joseph Probate Court Judge is December 31, 2012.