

# PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

GALLATIN COUNTY CASA/GAL

## WORKING WITH PURPOSE

By Montana CASA/GAL

The opportunity to spotlight the CASA/GAL program of Gallatin County allowed us to meet the Executive Director, Glenda Noyes and get a little background on her so we could learn more about the program she runs.

Having been blessed to grow up with both parents and caring siblings Glenda always knew she was fortunate and wanted to give back. Volunteering was her way to give back and was a central part of her. She even assisted in the development, implementation and running of a seasonal overnight homeless shelter while also serving on an adult restorative justice council. She was also a foster parent and still to this day accepts emergency placement for children that don't have an immediate home to go to.

It was during her volunteering that she met two of the CASA/GAL of Gallatin County Board members. During their conversations it came to light the current Executive Directors were retiring and they encouraged Glenda to apply. With much consideration and thoughtful reflection Glenda felt a peace in her heart and resigned from the County Government position she had held for 18 years and started with CASA/GAL on July 2016.

Since coming on as the Executive Director for CASA/GAL meant she would be filling some large shoes, she set right to work. She was a staff of one and had plenty of work to do. This was her first time working for a nonprofit so she cast a wide net and learned through trial and error what would work and what wasn't working, especially as it pertained to fundraising. She was grateful to the other program Executive Directors who were there for her. They would lend their expertise when asked and helped her overcome obstacles to be even more successful.



## WORKING THROUGH COVID AND MAKING A CHANGE FOR THE GOOD

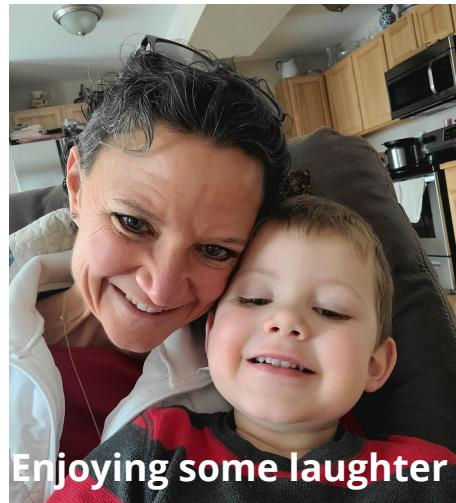
The CASA/Gal program under Glenda's direction has grown from 60 advocates to 90 and they were able to increase her staff by adding Sita, her Child Advocacy Specialist. CASA of Gallatin has always been fortunate to serve 100% of their children in foster care and Glenda was able to guide the program into a much better financial position than it had been previously.

During the last year facing COVID, the program has found challenges that have required them to be a little more creative in order to meet the needs of the children and their advocates. They have seen an increase in volunteer recruitment because they were able to create online training courses that allow advocates to take the classes remotely. They have also seen their advocates get creative with their remote visits by sending craft projects to their CASA children and working with them on the craft through video.

Glenda shared with us that she feels one of their programs greatest accomplishments has been an Enrichment Program. The goal of the enrichment fund is to give children in care some normalcy and opportunities they would not otherwise experience. Enriching their lives through sports, academics, theater and art. This program has a one page application completed by the CASA when they see a need for their child. The Gallatin CASA/GAL program has been able to bless many children and were even able to buy a CASA child their own Saxophone so that she could take music lessons online (a volunteer is providing the lessons free of charge).

The program's new goal is to move their office into a larger space so they may add more staff to help recruit advocates to be able to continue providing a CASA to 100% of their abused and neglected children.

Glenda, with her drive, compassion, determination and pure love is changing the lives of CASA Children through her program's visionary journey.



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