

## **Jan Pretus**

### **January 2018 Volunteer Spotlight**

Jan was sworn in on August 17, 2010 and has been an active advocate since that date, often serving on multiple cases at a time. Jan has been an advocate to 15 children over the last 7 years. The outcomes of these cases have been very different; some were adopted, some went home to their parents, and others were permanently placed with relatives. Jan has been a fierce advocate for all of these children both in and out of the court room. She has made sure that the children have received necessary services and were in the best placement possible.

In January of this year, Jan will get to witness the 5<sup>th</sup> child that she has advocated for be adopted. The amazing thing about this last adoption is that Jan has advocated for this child for over 6 years; never missing a visit or a significant life event. When Jan became the advocate for this little girl, DCFS was trying to work with her family to keep her in the home. Jan was there for this child when she was removed from her parents and later removed from a relative caregiver. Jan attended science fairs and spelling competitions with her CASA child when her foster parents could not. Jan was active in facilitating the current placement, which will become this little girl's permanent home after being in foster care for 7 years.

Prior to this case, Jan was a constant in the life of two little girls for over 5 years before they were adopted into their forever home. Jan was the only consistent person in their lives and helped them settle into the 6 foster placements that they experienced prior to being moved to their forever home. Those little girls still ask their parents to see Ms. Jan; in fact one of them told their mother that they wouldn't have wanted to get adopted if she knew it meant Ms. Jan wasn't going to come visit them every month!

In addition to being a very effective and busy CASA Volunteer, Jan is an active member of her church and volunteers for St. Vincent DePaul. Jan and her husband have a precious grandson that she has provided childcare for since his birth. We are never quite sure how she manages to visit her CASA kids each month, speak to schools, DCFS, and service providers about the children, meet with parents that are actively working their case plans, enter her Optima notes, and get her court reports done on time or early each month, but we are incredibly honored to have her for a volunteer. Her work for her CASA children is truly amazing!