



2023  
SCHOOL BELL AWARD  
CASA AWARDS  
CLOCK AWARDS

2024  
IRTA LEGACY AWARD

Presented June 12th, 2024

# AWARDS LUNCHEON AGENDA

2024

## Introductions

Laura Penman

## Presentation of School Bell Award

Martha (Marty) Mullin / AMBA

## Presentation of CASA Awards

Dr. Sharon M. Barnes / Kelly Bray / Jared Bond

## Presentation of CLOCK Awards

Ellen McKenzie / AMBA

## Presentation of IRTA Legacy Award

David Lennen / Michael & Joseph Coffman



# SCHOOL BELL AWARD

2023



1st place – Dearborn County RTA  
2nd place – Whitewater Valley RTA  
3rd place – Hancock County RTA

# COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE (CASA) AWARDS

2023



## **CHRISTINE FRANK**

**LaPorte RTA, 11 years as a CASA Volunteer**

Christine Frank has been a volunteer since November 2012 when she was sworn in as an officer of the court to advocate for the best interests of the children involved with the Department of Child Services. She has met with her CASA children on a regular basis, kept up on meetings with the Department of Child Services, kept in contact with parents and placements, and has shown up in court. She has made recommendations that may otherwise have been overlooked if she had not been there. Being a CASA volunteer is not an easy task. It takes heart, determination, sacrifice, and patience. Christine Frank possesses all of these traits!



## **STEVE FREES**

**Montgomery County RTA, 4 years as a  
CASA Volunteer**

Steve Frees has been a CASA since 2019 and has advocated for 10 children during that time! He is always well-liked by his “CASA kids” and gets to know them well. That allows him to advocate strongly for their best interests. In one case, he advocated for the child to be reunited with his mother in rehab and transitional housing – which was not a standard practice. That child’s case ended with reunification! Steve Frees has a very big heart for kids. We are extremely fortunate that he has chosen to be a CASA volunteer and direct his efforts to improve the lives of our most vulnerable children.



## **HARRIET ANN HOFFMAN**

### **Jefferson County RTA, 7 years as a CASA Volunteer**

Harriet Ann Hoffman walks amongst two of the strongest and most valuable assets for our children in the state of Indiana: Teachers and Court Appointed Advocates. During her seven- year tenure as a Court Appointed Special Advocate, she has stepped in to be the voice for 28 children in 16 cases. Because of her efforts, these 28 children spent substantially less time in foster care, received more services such as therapy and tutoring, and found safe, loving, permanent homes. The 140 hours of on-going training she has acquired over the years underscores her commitment against child maltreatment in Jefferson County by equipping herself with the necessary knowledge and skills to foster a safer environment for all children. Harriet Ann Hoffman is truly the epitome of grit, compassion, and hope for our children.



## **MARTY HUMES**

### **Monroe-Owen County RTA, 9 years as a CASA Volunteer**

Marty Humes has been a CASA for nine years and has been a diligent and conscientious advocate in Monroe County from day one. Her life experience and persistent presence on her cases brought much needed cohesion and case knowledge to all the Child and Family Team Meetings she attended. She does not yield to what might be seen as the easiest conclusion to a case, but always keeps what is in the best interest of the child at the forefront. She has truly been the child's voice in a setting where children might feel intimidated. Mary is effective in reaching out to parents communicating that she advocates for the entire family. She has been instrumental in letting the judge know the needs of the child. Mary Humes is a tremendous asset to the Monroe County CASA program.



## **SUSAN ISBELL**

### **Blue River RTA, 5 years as a CASA Volunteer**

Working as the Head of Special Ed. Department at North Harrison High School, Susan Isbell saw how much CASA was needed. She was retired only one year before she joined the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program. Many of her cases involve parents caught in the drug abuse epidemic. She meets with children, gives feedback to judges and caseworkers, and even changes her plans to accommodate meeting the children on their schedules. Some cases have successful endings, while others are heartbreaking. But Susan Isbell's kindness, caring, and concern for a child's welfare knows no bounds.



## **MARGARET MCGIRT**

### **Orange County RTA, 6 years as a CASA Volunteer**

Margaret McGirt has felt herself drawn to disadvantaged children. Drawing from her own background growing up slightly disadvantaged, she realized that there were children in her classroom who would benefit from some additional attention from an adult in their lives. When CASA was started in 2018 in Orange County, Margaret was contacted by the CASA director and the Orange County Judge and was asked to become part of the program. She embraced the role at that time and continues to do so. Some cases are more work than others, and some have a better ending than others. Margaret says, "It's very rewarding when you see a child has a better outcome in life because of the effort you have made."

# AMBA OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER CLOCK AWARDS

2023



## MARY ANN TULCHINSKY

### Area 1-St. Joseph County

Mary is very involved in the Northeast Neighborhood Food Pantry in South Bend, Indiana. She has volunteered there for 15 years and is in charge of scheduling all volunteers for the food pantry. She works on site three days a week. On other days she is shopping and organizing the supplies that are needed. Another activity, Mary Ann is a tour guide for the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. She also serves the Parish Council, and is on the Executive Board of the Northeast Neighborhood Council. In addition, Mary Ann has served as the official home basketball score keeper for 30 years at Notre Dame. She will be inducted into the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame in April.



## MARGARET WEYBRIGHT

### Area 2-Elkhart County

Margaret is actively involved in 4-H where she has been a leader for 59 years with Jacksonians 4-H Club. Plus, she is in home extension, volunteers monthly with the sewing group, making blankets for local shelters, takes and leads lessons for her club, and gives sewing demonstrations at the county fair. At her retirement center, Margaret volunteers in the office. She welcomes new residents and helps them become acclimated. She collects and organizes quilt blocks from the churches around the country and preps them for sewing into 6-8 wall hangings for and at the yearly church conference. In her spare time Margaret helps wash donated bottle caps that will be converted into benches.



## **DEBRA MILLER**

### **Area 3- Cass County**

Debra volunteers in the food pantry at her church, Trinity Episcopal. She is on call for emergency needs and helps with clothing needs when they arise. Debra is chairperson for her church's annual school supply give away held each year prior to the beginning of the school year. She oversees the purchasing of the items as well as organizing the actual distribution of the material. Deb is on the planning committee for the church diocese summer camp. She helps plan and organize the activities. Debra cooks meals, provides transportation to doctor appointments, and she is available to "listen" when a person needs a listening ear.



## **NANCY REED**

### **Area 4-Parke-Vermillion County**

Nancy spends many volunteer hours with Tri Kappa Vermillion County Community Foundation, and Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship. As Tri Kappa State Scholarship Chair, she prepares all materials and communications for the 92 counties, trains state committee members, works with scholarship chairs at 7 regional meetings, prepares applications for students, distributes applications, helps in selection process and notifies applicants of results. Nancy participates in student interviews, writing summaries for nominees for the Vermillion County Lilly Endowment Scholarship. Too, she makes the time to participate in retired teacher meetings and projects.



## **MARJORIE PATTON**

### **Area 5-Marion-Wayne County**

Marjorie is active at Mount Auburn Church where she participates on the nominating committee, recruits volunteers, makes schedules, and buys supplies for the church's Sunday coffee get-togethers. She writes articles for the church newsletter, handles emails, organizes activities, plans group meetings, and manages setup and cleanup. In 2023 Marjorie organized all aspects of a senior bus trip to Canada,



solving travel problems in a calm manner. Each year she organizes a team for the Alzheimer's Association Walk to help prevent Alzheimer's Disease and feeds the group lunch after the walk. Marge is always willing to help whether it is taking care of her neighbor's chickens or driving friends to doctor's appointments.

## **JOHN CLESTER**

### **Area 6-Grant County**



John has been sorting and checking eyeglasses and shipping them to countries where they are needed. He works in his building 8 hours a day five days a week.

He delivers hundreds of packages of dog food to animal shelters in Grant County. He has two special needs people who help. As he states, "We all need people." At birthday parties he encourages not to buy personal gifts, instead buy gifts for animal shelters, and he will deliver for the birthday person.



## **PATRICIA WILHELM**

### **Area 7-Whitewater Valley (Franklin County)**

Patricia became a member of the Franklin County Arts Council in 1992 and has been its president for several years. She spends many hours helping to bring cultural events, concerts, plays, and art shows to Franklin County. Patricia is a ten year member of the Franklin County Community Foundation. She was a board member of the Imagination Library of Franklin County serving as a grant writer. She has been part of the program that helps FCHS students improve their skills in interviewing for jobs. Patricia also plants flowers for all neighbors plus she does other landscaping.



## **HARRY HUBER**

### **Area 8-Greene County**

Harry was active in Habitat for Humanity for fifteen years, organizing a team, fund-raising, and traveling to various locations in the country to help build houses for those in need. Taking his knowledge, he and members of the community have shifted to help families in Greene



and Sullivan through Hands up for Housing. Their mission is remodel construction for families such as building ramps, and other modifications to make existing houses accessible for the handicapped. Harry encourages the youth in his church to participate in these projects teaching youth the skills they need. The church and the Greene County Foundation provide support and funding.



## **JANICE PICKENS**

### **Area 9-Orange County**

Janice is President of the O.C.R.T.A. She plans and leads three yearly meetings. She provides the meals. Janice is a member of the Orleans Chapter of Tri Kappa. Her work with Reading is Fun enables many students to receive free books. As Province Officer for Tri Kappa, she is responsible for 19 Tri Kappa chapters in southern Indiana. Janice is a member of the Friends of the Library (Paoli) serving as secretary since 2011. Janice has been a judge in the annual speech contest, including this year. She also participates in mock interviews with graduating seniors as part of an AP class.



## **CATHERINE MUND**

### **Area 10-Dearborn County**

Catherine has been a Membership Chair for the past ten years. She is passionate about increasing IRTA membership in our association and has encouraged members to join by payroll deduction. She sends emails and letters to perspective new members. Cathy works with the local Sewing Project sewing pillowcase dresses. The dresses are part of Samaritan Purse boxes. She also has made over twenty baby quilts to be given to the Pregnancy Care Center located in Lawrenceburg, IN. She purchases and delivers canned goods for the food pantry. She also makes cards and shares them with the Sewing Group who signs them and sends them to individuals in need.

# Legacy Award

2024



## Nancy Tolson

The inaugural IRTA Legacy Award honors outstanding service to the association, and we are proud to present this accolade to Nancy Tolson of Marion County - Wayne Township. Nancy has shown exemplary leadership within the Indiana Retired Teachers Association (IRTA), serving as President from 2009 to 2011 and as Executive Director from 2012

to 2015. She also made significant contributions as the IRTA Legislative Chair from 2007 to 2009 and again from 2020 to 2023.

In addition to her work with the IRTA, Nancy has been a dedicated Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for nearly 16 years, demonstrating her commitment to the welfare of children. In recognition of her exceptional service, she was honored with the CASA Award in 2019.

Nancy continues to be a valuable asset to the IRTA and remains deeply committed to her local Marion-Wayne Retired Teachers Association. Nancy's dedication and numerous contributions make her a deserving recipient of the IRTA Legacy Award. Her tireless efforts and passion have touched countless lives, leaving a lasting legacy of service and compassion.



We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the winners, and we express our gratitude on behalf of the Indiana Retired Teachers Association for your valued presence and participation.

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2024 SPONSORS

