

# Time, Talents, and Treasurers - Our Volunteers Make All the Difference

It is difficult to find the right words to describe the joy I experience as a greeter at the Children's Advocacy Center. That's an unexpected word to associate with the serious business of the CAC. The joy is the result of many factors: the kindness of the staff and volunteers; the fun of new friends, if only for a short time, and most of all, the change in the young people who come to be interviewed. They come in angry, afraid, and confused. They leave with smiles on their faces. I have had children ask to spend the night or to come back to see us the next day. Parents are often glad to have professional support and guidance. I am always happy when the Seguin paper has front page stories about another molester going to prison.

I don't think there is a better way to spend a few hours. If you don't have time to give, supporting the CAC with a donation is a lasting way to invest in our young people. When young people leave our building, they know that there are people in the community who really care about them. Our support comes from ladies who make bags, blankets, and quilts for the children; from people who fill the bags; from family greeters; from law enforcement; from CPS; from board members, and from donors. It is truly a joy to be one of those people. - Sonja Searle

Sonja has been a dedicated volunteer since we opened in 2004. Not only is Sonja a Family Greeter, playing with the children when they come to the center for forensic interviews, but she is also does Medical Accompaniment at GRMC with our child clients who need to have a sexual assault exam or physical assault exam by one of the specially trained nurses at the hospital. In her ten years Sonja has donated more than 883 hours of her time to the children we have served at the GCCAC. We are truly thankful for Sonja and all of our wonderful volunteers! We certainly could not do this work without their help and support!

If you are interested in volunteering or just learning more about volunteering with the GCCAC, please contact Rose Mary Ermel at 830-303-4760 or [rmermel@gccac.net](mailto:rmermel@gccac.net).



*Above: Sonja Searle, GCCAC volunteer since 2004*

# Seguin Chili's to donate proceeds

**CHILI'S IS PROUD TO SUPPORT**  
**Guadalupe County Children's Advocacy Center**

Let Chili's do the cooking while we support Guadalupe County Children's Advocacy Center at the same time. With each flyer presented on January 22, 2014 Chili's will donate 10% of the event day sales back to this great organization.

The Guadalupe County Children's Advocacy Center Give Back Event is:  
 January 22, 2014  
 from 10:45am - 10:30pm

only at:  
 Seguin  
 1100 Interstate 10 East  
 Seguin, TX 78155  
 830-379-7153 - [www.chills.com](http://www.chills.com)

**We look forward to seeing you at Chili's!**

**more GIVING BACK happens here**

Give Back Event flyer required with each check to receive credit for the sale. Sale cannot be included in donation amount with out flyer. Offer only valid on the date and location stated above. Donations will not be given on sales made prior to or past this date.

Take this newsletter or a cutout of the flyer to the left when you go eat at Chili's in Seguin on Wednesday, January 22nd, and Chili's will donate 10% of sales to the GCCAC! Enjoy lunch, dinner, dessert or drinks all day and help the Guadalupe County Children's Advocacy Center!

## Help for parents of sexually abused children

In our last newsletter, we told you about a new service the GCCAC is offering to parents of children affected by sexual abuse. Thanks to the Swalm Family Foundation, we were awarded a grant to develop and distribute a workbook to help parents navigate life after learning of their child's disclosure of sexual abuse. The workbook discusses several topics that affect children and families subjected to sexual abuse. Also included in the workbook are activities that parents can complete on their own or with their children to help foster open and supportive communication.


The GCCAC and partnering CAC's collectively distributed over 130 workbooks to non-offending caregivers in 2013. Initial data collected prior to receiving a workbook showed

lower rates of confidence in their abilities to move forward. Participating non-offending caregivers were asked questions after completing the workbook, and data shows the workbook helped reduce their levels of fear and anxiety as well as help boost their confidence in their abilities as a caregiver to move forward. Over 60% of the participating non-offending caregivers involved their children in the activities throughout the workbook.

Data collected after completing the workbook showed it was helpful to the participating parents and their families. When asked how the workbook was helpful, one parent explained, "It helped me understand what was being told to me. It was like reading a textbook; it (sexual abuse) was something that I never thought would happen to us and that it happens a lot more often." Another parent told the GCCAC the workbook helped them "...cope and let them know their feelings were normal." Other parents stated the workbook helped them to better communicate with their children and provided insight on how to deal with abuse and neglect.

Overall, the workbook accomplished the goal we set out to achieve. The GCCAC will continue to offer the workbook to parents of children affected by sexual abuse. We look forward to receiving continuing feedback from parents to ensure the workbook remains a helpful instrument in their recovery from the effects of child sexual abuse.

For more information about this project, please contact Michele Meehan at 830-303-4760 or [mmeehan@gccac.net](mailto:mmeehan@gccac.net).



**fund**  
for courage

*Yes, I/we will support **The Fund for Courage!***

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Org/Company/Church \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly commitment \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Please check one:*

One with Courage \$5,000 or more

Children's Table \$1,000

Friend of Children \$500

Advocate \$250

Kid \$100

Join us on Facebook! Search "Guadalupe County Children's Advocacy Center" and "friend" us!

# Upcoming Events and Happenings:

*the newsletter of the Guadalupe County  
Children's Advocacy Center for our*

Winter 2013

**5th Annual  
Knock Out Child Abuse  
Bowl-A-Thon**  
Fiesta Lanes, New Braunfels  
April 25, 2014

The 5th Annual Bowl-A-Thon to benefit the **Guadalupe County Resource Room** will be great fun again this year! Form a team and sign up today! Sign-up sheets available by emailing [cwilliams@gccac.net](mailto:cwilliams@gccac.net) or going to our website [www.gccac.net](http://www.gccac.net).

**3rd Annual Auction**  
March 29, 2014  
KC Hall, Seguin

District Attorney **Heather McMinn**, County Attorney **Dave Willborn**, and Sheriff **Arnold Zwicke** will hold our 3rd Annual Auction benefiting the GCCAC's new building fund on March 29, 2014! There will be a wide array of items and trips, so watch for more details to come!

**2nd Annual  
Schertz Designer Purse Bingo**  
May 1, 2014  
KC Hall, Schertz

Look for tickets in March at locations in Schertz and Seguin! Check our Facebook page for updates and information as it approaches! This event supports our annual operating expenses.

*There's something for everyone!!! Come out, have fun, and support the GCCAC!!!*

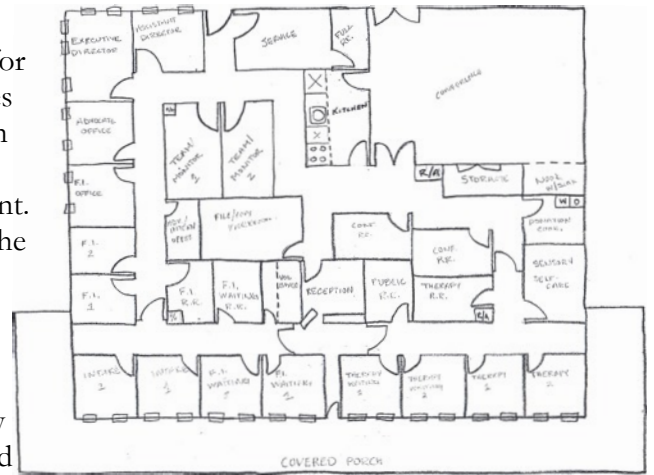
**SAVE THE DATES!!!**

# Friends with Courage!

## A decade of service to the community

With our first decade behind us, we have certainly learned many very valuable lessons, helped numerous families, educated the community about abuse and neglect, seen justice through the court system, conducted more than 2,900 forensic interviews, provided thousands of free counseling hours, and facilitated a team approach to child abuse investigations in Guadalupe County. Now what?! Well... unfortunately, child abuse hasn't stopped happening in our community, but fortunately, the GCCAC is here to stay to serve those affected by abuse and neglect. Our staff, board, volunteers, and team members are committed to the cause and are continuing to work towards helping those who have been abused and creating awareness and prevention efforts throughout the community. We are thankful to have the continued support of people, just like you, as we move into our second decade of hope, healing, justice, and safety for the children of Guadalupe County.

As you may already know, we have more than outgrown our current facility, and in the coming year, we will continue to work toward obtaining a larger home for our services that will meet our needs for years to come. We have formed a Building Committee, comprised of board and non-board members, who will be assisting the GCCAC with this project. We are actively looking for land on which to build a new center. We have tentative drawings of our new facility that will be finalized as we obtain the land. We are also continuously working on raising funds for this project. In that effort, we plan to have a few opportunities for community involvement - particularly the Sheriff's Auction on Saturday, March 29th. We have an auction committee members who are currently out seeking donations for this event. We are looking for donations of items to auction off in both the live and silent auctions that evening. If you would like to be involved in this event, either with your time, donations, or by sponsoring a table, please contact Christy Williams 830-303-4760 or [cwilliams@gccac.net](mailto:cwilliams@gccac.net) or call Dawn Caddell at the Guadalupe Sheriff's Office at 830-379-1224. All of the money raised at the auction will go directly toward the costs associated with our new building.



424 N. River Street  
Seguin, TX 78155



### Another great intern becomes a paid employee



Tina Bryan, a South Carolina native, joined the GCCAC in September for a fall internship with hopes of being accepted into the Social Work undergraduate program at Texas State University-San Marcos, where she was already a student. Since completing her internship hours, Tina applied and was accepted into the program. Tina plans to pursue a degree in Social Work with a tentative goal of graduating in December 2015.

Tina has been an asset to the Center in her short time with us. She has asked so many great questions and is soaking up all she can. She is introspective and funny too! Tina is a great addition to our staff, and we look forward to working with her as she completes her degree plan. Tina will make a great social worker. She truly has the heart for it! We wholeheartedly welcome Tina to our GCCAC family!