

A Grateful Farewell *Embracing the Next Chapter*

by Donna McBride, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Unit Supervisor



The CASA team
Photo courtesy of Donna McBride



Donna with state office
Photo courtesy of Donna McBride

After nearly 21 years with Pinal County Juvenile Court, I announced my retirement for April. It is with a deep sense of gratitude and nostalgia that I reflect on the incredible journey I've had.

Reflecting the journey

Relocating back to Casa Grande in 2002, I was quickly "summoned" with a call from the Hon. Judge Bill O'Neil to come "volunteer" at the court.

While that volunteer role quickly turned into a full time job, it has been a journey filled with challenges, growth and friendship that I will forever be grateful for.

Over the years, I have achieved significant accomplishments and navigated through

challenges like staff changes, tight budgets and COVID.

The highlight of my career has been supervising my incredible Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) team. Children being removed from their homes because of abuse and neglect is heartbreaking. The work is hard. But my team has done so with compassion and determination.

Since CASA began 35 years ago, over 2,700 children (just in Pinal County) have been advocated with over 450 adopted into forever homes.

As I retire, I will carry with me countless memories, the triumphs of teamwork and a shared sense of purpose. I have worked hard to put together a team in place so

when I close the door to my office one last time, the work will go on. That's what good leadership is all about. When you leave, the work continues. And our kids deserve it.

Retirement marks one door closing and another opening.

There's been a few too many tears over the past few months as I prepared to hand over the baton to new leadership. But I know my new chapter will certainly include many of the same activities I have always done – serving my community, volunteering and promoting what a great city Casa Grande is.

Here's to new beginnings, lasting friendships and the adventures that await!