



# Advocate News

HOUSTON'S LEADING VOICE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CHILD ABUSE

CHILD ADVOCATES, INC.

SPRING 2005

## Beyond the Numbers

On first glance, it seems like a whole lot of numbers. Eight caseworkers, six attorneys, five schools, three counties, two grandmothers, two psychologists, two fathers, one mother.

But at the root of everyone and everything involved in Darrel Haertl's first case was the number he was most concerned with - three innocent children.

Darrell first met Jesse (14), Tanya (9) and Corey (8) at their maternal grandmothers' house after being assigned as their court appointed advocate. CPS had taken the children into custody after several reports of physical neglect by their mother, as well as documented drug use and drug trafficking in her home.

The grandmother could care for them while they were in custody, but was unsure about being a long-term placement for all three children. Darrell contacted the paternal grandmother of Tanya and Corey, who was interested in having the two children live with her in San Marcos. Darrell coordinated with the caseworker and Hays County CPS to ensure a homestudy was completed to determine if her home was an appropriate placement. If approved, the younger two children could be placed there after finishing the current semester at school.

His immediate concerns were three-fold: the children's current safety and well-being, the family plan of service for the mother and two fathers (Jesse's father was different than the father of the younger two children), and permanent placement options if reunification with the parents was unattainable.

"The importance of helping the children to understand what was happening - and being honest and forthcoming when they were left out of the 'adult circle' - can't be underestimated. Being that 'constant' is critical. Without [our] involvement in this case, there would have been no continuity."

Darrell ensured that appointments were made for Corey's heart, for Jesse's drug and alcohol assessment, for Tanya and Corey's eyes, for Jesse's football physical and finally for dental and counseling all around. He spent weeks trying to track down Medicaid cards for the children amongst an intimidating web of government agencies.

He requested meetings with administrators in the children's schools. After much research, he assisted Jesse in applying for AP classes and a college tuition scholarship program, and by making several phone calls, secured school uniforms for Tanya and Corey through Child Advocates.

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**Thrive  
John Krebs:  
A big man with  
an even bigger heart**

**“Those are the things that might not otherwise happen - and who knows how that child’s life might be different if they hadn’t?”**

*On any given day in our city, more than 4,200 children languish in foster care because of life threatening abuse or neglect. With our current resources, Child Advocates can only provide a volunteer - like Darrell - to fewer than a third of them. If you would like to help us provide critical advocacy services for more children, please consider becoming a volunteer or making a financial donation to our organization online at [www.childadvocates.org](http://www.childadvocates.org).*



# Beyond the Numbers CONTINUED

He spoke to guidance counselors, principals and registrars, making sure records were transferred from the children’s previous schools - the ones they attended before being placed with their grandmother’s - and that they would transfer again when the younger two moved to San Marcos. He even spoke in-depth to the grandmother there about working independently with the kids on schoolwork over the summer, as their transfer prohibited them from attending formalized summer school there.

“Some things seem insignificant, like going to an H.I.S.D. administrative building to take care of an insurance form so Jesse would be eligible for football when his grandmother couldn’t take off work to get there during office hours. But those are the things that might not otherwise happen - and who knows how that child’s life might be different if they hadn’t?”

Darrell’s persistence and follow-through helped locate Jesse’s father - whom he’d had almost no contact with for more than four years. Although he didn’t wish to care for Jesse, CPS was able to serve him with paperwork allowing for eventual termination of his rights. Darrell also ensured that Tanya and Corey’s father had a family plan of service in place so that he would be able to work towards possible reunification with his two children. Although he also diligently attempted to contact the mother regarding progress she had made toward her own plan of service, she often disappeared for weeks and never actually enrolled in any services offered to her.

When it came time for Tanya and Corey to be transferred to their grandmother’s home in San Marcos, Darrell made a critical decision.

“I wanted to remain their Child Advocate as long as my not being in San Marcos didn’t become a negative,” he said. “I did not feel that it was in their best interest to start over with yet another new person and I wanted to see this thing through.”

Upon their moving, Darrell learned that the grandmother’s house was actually located partially in two different counties, creating a jurisdiction issue on which county would handle the case. He made many phone calls and sent countless emails to caseworkers and supervisors in all three involved counties until he was able to provide the grandmother with concrete answers and contacts.

He continued to visit them at least once a month, making the 5-hour round-trip drive to San Marcos without hesitation. He maintained regular contact with the school there as well as the doctor providing counseling to both of the children.

Meanwhile, talked with Jesse and his grandmother about Jesse’s feelings on termination of his mother’s parental rights, which would allow his grandmother to adopt him. In the role of mediator, Darrell spoke to both of them in depth about the changes adoption might mean in their lives. He conducted extensive research on adoption subsidies and adoption tuition assistance for them and spoke to Jesse’s caseworker about additional information she might have that would help educate them.

At the final trial for the case, after the mother relinquished her parental rights, the court terminated on both fathers - allowing for both grandmothers to eventually adopt.

“After the hearing was concluded, the judge informed the attorneys that the only reason they got termination on Tanya and Corey’s father was because of [Darrell]’s testimony,” said Darrell’s coordinator, Kay Anderson. “He can be very proud of the way it turned out and the difference he personally made in the outcome for these children.”

“Since I don’t have children, my greatest concern was how I would relate,” Darrell said. “I still have so much to learn but these kids made it easy to work for their best interest. Hopefully I made a difference in their lives, but at the very least, I know I’m a better person from getting to know them.”

# From the CEO

The headlines are far from fading away. In fact, stories of child abuse and child welfare reform have appeared with even greater frequency recently. And these stories aren't just happening elsewhere, they're happening in our own community. Harris County has more children in foster care than any other county in the state of Texas.

Some of you may have seen our Letter to the Editor that appeared in the Houston Chronicle Outlook Section on Sunday, January 23. Below is a short excerpt:

*At Child Advocates, Inc., we have first-hand knowledge of the burden that frontline Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers are facing. Our volunteers are assigned to a CPS case to fill in any gaps in the system. We know that the majority of the individuals working for CPS care about the well-being of the children.*

*We also recognize the limitations that they face, including repeated financial cuts to an already struggling child welfare system. While the legislature has a responsibility to fix the broken agency born out of misguided priorities, it is the entire community's responsibility to help the 4,200 abused and neglected children currently in foster care in the Houston area.*

*Despite the best intentions of all involved, many children slip through the bureaucratic cracks, and as we have seen, the results are tragic. At a time when the system seems hopelessly flawed and tragic stories of horrific abuse surface in the news every day, Child Advocates challenges all Houstonians to **do something**. Please do not just watch from the sidelines and expect others to become involved.*

The bottom line is that behind each statistic is an innocent child. I'd like to personally thank those of you who recognize that it's going to take a collaborative effort to truly help these children, and especially those of you who have already stepped up by way of your time and/or money.

If you've been thinking about becoming more involved – now would be the time to “do something,” as April is National Child Abuse Prevention month. For ways to get more involved in our program or to make an online donation, please visit our website at [www.childadvocates.org](http://www.childadvocates.org).

Regards,



Chief Executive Officer

# Breaking the Cycle

**CHILD ADVOCATES LOCALIZES NATIONAL  
CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH**

Court appointed advocates dedicate their time and efforts to truly *breaking the cycle* of child abuse. Their advocacy focuses

not just on the effects of this terrible epidemic, but also on its ultimate prevention.



A volunteer is often the difference between a life of abuse and a life of safety and love. With that feeling

of safety and love, comes a form of prevention that can change the future of many generations to come.

Recent media coverage like that evidenced below, has truly brought to light the issues our volunteers face each day:

*“We eliminated 92 percent of child abuse prevention programs [in 2003]. It's not that they weren't effective. It was a way to save money.”*

House Human Services Committee Chairman Rep. Carlos Uresti.

No unity on fixing children's services.

Houston Chronicle, November 1, 2004.

*“It's taken more than 500 deaths of abused children in Texas over the past 2 1/2 years to awaken the public and their representatives to the grievous consequences of slashing the budget of the agency entrusted with protecting those kids.”*

Picking up the pieces.

Houston Chronicle, Editorial, January 13, 2005.

In 1983, President Ronald Reagan officially declared April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Child Abuse Prevention Month activities raise awareness about this widespread problem—and most importantly, about what each of us can do to help prevent the abuse and neglect of our children.

In honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month, several local retailers and businesses will help support our efforts to raise awareness by selling our “Do Something” bracelets during the month of April.

Join us in our efforts to get the word out: bracelets will be on sale beginning April 1 for \$1 each at our office. Talk about a “conversation catalyst” - come by to get yours today!

# Focus on the Friends

FRIENDS OF CHILD ADVOCATES



The Friends Governance Council has been most fortunate to have volunteer Amy Anton (left) leading our Membership Committee for the last two years. Even though Amy has three boys under the age of five she has led the planning and implementation of two of the most successful Friends Membership Socials in our history. 2004's *Palm Beach* event was attended by over 85 renewing and new Friends members and this year's *My True*

*Love* chocolate tasting was even more successfully memorable. Not only does Amy have a knack at charming party concepts, she has always managed to get most of the expenses donated adhering to our tight budgetary demands. Her enthusiasm for Child Advocates is contagious and her commitment to the Friends is an inspiration to many new members supporting our cause. Amy is the second generation of Way family members to be involved with Child Advocates. Parents, Mary Faye and Peter Way, past donors and volunteers, can be proud that their legacy of generosity has continued!

## ANGELS HOVER AROUND OSCAR DE LA RENTA FOR 2005!

Each year we are blessed to have our corporate sponsor Neiman Marcus underwrite the Angels of Hope Luncheon and Fashion Show. Each year we question how the next luncheon could possibly be superior to the last, yet Neiman's always delivers, delights and surprises the crowd. In 2004, fashion icon Carolina Herrera, who has graced every fashion magazine cover on the rack, made a personal appearance at our event. Her collection was stunning; and our proceeds reflected the public's appreciation - breaking the record for highest net dollars to date.

We have already learned that the fashion world is smiling upon us again, as Neiman Marcus will bring in Oscar de la Renta for 2005 Luncheon scheduled for Tuesday, November 29 at the Westin Galleria Hotel. Known as a fashion heavyweight, de la Renta's signature includes women's and menswear, fur, sleepwear, lingerie, eyewear, fragrances, cosmetics and home furnishing. His home collection, like his clothing and accessories, represent extraordinary style, refinement and elegance. Mark your calendar now for this year's event, and keep an eye out for further news on the Friends' feature fundraiser.

# Snapshots



"Angels" - Carolina Herrera, Bob Devlin, Shelly Ann Marks and Ellie Francisco



ExxonMobil volunteers assist in the merriment at the Holiday Party in November.



"Hoopla Station" volunteers help Gilbert cheer on Child Advocates marathoners

# Voices

COURT APPOINTED ADVOCATE VOLUNTEERS TALK ABOUT HOW MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN AN ABUSED CHILD'S LIFE HAS MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR OWN.



**Kristie Castilow**

"I was made aware of Child Advocates by George Kaleh of Cornerbrooke Development. Soon afterwards, I became a volunteer and quickly learned that I could truly make an impact on the lives of children who are most in need."



**Harry Jackson**

"As a court appointed advocate, being the voice for an abused or neglected child has been one of the most important and rewarding experiences in my life."



**Susan Bishop-Brown**

"Child Advocates is an organization very dear to my heart. I can honestly say, that for me, there is no better feeling than knowing that I have been able to be a voice for abused children and give them another chance at life."

# All-Star Partners

CHILD ADVOCATES EXTENDS OUR DEEPEST APPRECIATION TO EMPLOYEES OF OUR PARTNERING AGENCIES WHO NOT ONLY FACILITATE A SPIRIT OF TEAMWORK, BUT HAVE GONE THE EXTRA MILE FOR THE BENEFIT OF ABUSED CHILDREN.



**Simona Dunn**

"Simona has such a passion for the children she serves. She is very knowledgeable and will back down from no one when it comes to the best interest of the children she serves."

- Kimberlye Parker,  
Advocacy Coordinator

# Donor Spotlight

## PROMARK

30 pairs of Pro-Mark Limited Edition Rush 30th anniversary sticks, used by Neil Peart during Rush's 30th Anniversary 2004 World Tour, were auctioned off by Pro Mark. Thanks to the generosity of the world's largest manufacturer of drumsticks, Rush, and their collective creativity, over \$60,000 was raised for Child Advocates, Inc.



## HOUSTON ENDOWMENT & BROWN FOUNDATION

Local leaders in the philanthropic community, the Houston Endowment Inc. and The Brown Foundation, Inc. have reaffirmed their historical commitment to improving our city and the lives of its most vulnerable residents. We are sincerely grateful to the board members of the Houston Endowment Inc. for their 3-year pledge of \$225,000 and the trustees of The Brown Foundation, Inc. for their 3-year pledge of \$180,000. Their long-term commitments provide the stability necessary for us to continue serving more children.

## THE BOB & CATHLEEN DAVIS FOUNDATION

Nearly 8 years ago, Bob Davis made a decision that he wanted to become more involved with an organization that made a difference in an area of true need. After searching the internet and finding the Houston Children's Festival, he decided to volunteer. Since this time, his involvement with our organization has evolved and grown each year and most recently included a donation of more than \$15,000 to support our court services program. Bob's long-term commitment to the children served by our volunteers is truly appreciated, and when he eventually retires, he will make an excellent court appointed advocate! Thank you Bob and Cathleen!



# Thanks Donors

Child Advocates, Inc. extends our sincerest appreciation to contributors who supported our mission by making a financial contribution between the months of October 2004 and January 2005 - ultimately allowing us to serve the children in custody who need us.

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Sunsorce  
Synergetic Communication  
Belynnda Taylor  
Kathy Taylor  
Michael and Kathleen Terracina  
Texas Capital Bank  
Texas Molecular  
Texas Motor Transportation Association  
David and Emy Thailing  
Third Coast Volleyball Club  
Dolly Dawson Thomas  
Brenda Thompson  
Earl Thompson  
Kevin and Laura Tieman  
Traci-Scott Salon  
Linda Trinh  
Michelle Twardowsky  
Tyson Foods  
Nicholas and Deborah Vafiadis  
Lisa Vassallo  
Jennifer Vogel  
W.M. Dewey and Son, Inc.  
Gwen Wachel  
Waldron and Schneider  
Doug and Pauline Wall  
Carlos and Lori Wallace  
Christine Wardell  
Webster Intermediate School  
Weichert Realtors  
Dr. Elgin Wells  
Wells Design/Jerry Jeanmard  
Kim Werner  
Western Talk  
Benjamin Wilbanks  
Chuck and Lisa Williams  
Jared Williams  
Chayvone and Patricia Winfree  
Pamela Wofford  
Helene Wood  
Blake and Mindy Young Family Fund  
Claude and Janette Zackary

# Doing Something

## BAKER HUGHES AND MERVYN'S CHILDSPREE

Each August, Baker Hughes partners with Child Advocates for Mervyn's national ChildSpree program. Since its inception in 1995, the ChildSpree has grown from a shopping spree with a few children at three stores, to a citywide event. Baker Hughes' underwriting and volunteer commitment has helped the event grow to nine Mervyn's stores where more than 450 children and volunteer shoppers spend the morning getting the latest back-to-school clothing. Thank you Baker Hughes and Mervyn's for providing so many smiles and memories!

## MARK APPLGATE

Court appointed advocate, Mark Applegate was selected as the winner of the first Visteon 'Go the Extra Mile' employee volunteer award. As the award letter states: "Mr. Applegate's involvement with Child Advocates is compelling. He demonstrates personal sacrifice and dedication to a charity that is fully committed to helping children. Mark's efforts are truly to be commended." As a result of Mark sharing his volunteer experience and in honor of his efforts, Visteon presented a check to Child Advocates for \$10,000!

## CAR PROS PARTICIPANTS

Thanks to many of you, and several area auto service providers, Car Pros for Kids was a success again this year! In addition to each person that participated in the program, we would like to honor the following service providers for their participation this year: RMS Auto Care, Cornerstone Automotive (both Dairy Ashford & Wilcrest locations), Cunningham Auto Repair Service, Fairfield Auto Center, Kacal's Auto & Truck, Scott's Auto Repair & Collision Repair, Itzy's Auto Service, Sullivan's Advanced Auto Care and Specialized Auto Repair.

## KIDS & THE PEOPLE OF THE COURT

With the goal of producing an illustrated children's book, project coordinators Barbara Abell and Jackie Crowley (a court appointed advocate!) are working closely with literary consultant Kimberly Morris and many other volunteers on this new endeavor. This book will be an invaluable tool for teaching children ages 6 to 10 about the role of the advocate and various other people of the court they will encounter during their time in protective care and plans include distribution to all CASA programs. The project received a major boost when the Wal-Mart Foundation and the Texas Bar Foundation made generous grants in support of the special project.

## MARATHON RUNNERS

Over 100 people participated in the 2005 HP Houston Marathon, Aramco Half-Marathon, or Houston Press 5K on behalf of Child Advocates - ultimately raising over \$26,000 for our kids. Special thanks to husband-and-wife runners Steve and Debbie Pruettt for being our top fundraisers this year with a total of \$6,490, and to the many volunteers that braved the weather to cheer on the participants!

# YPC Update

## YOUNG PROFESSIONALS FOR CHILDREN

Look out 2005 - we're off and running already!

The Young Professionals for Children (YPC) rounded out 2004 with our annual Treasure Boxes booth at the holiday party - helping kids of all ages decorate over 450 golden treasure boxes.

Way to go **Carmen Bermudez** for heading up the city-wide collection of all the cigar boxes - a job that began all the way back in last July! A huge thank-you to Spec's, Downing Street, Junior League Special Projects



volunteers (for spray-painting the boxes!) and all of the YPC members who helped Carmen by stopping by various locations for pick-ups throughout the year, especially **Monte and Susan Bishop Brown, David Kim, Erin Moran and Jon Strieby.**

2005 YPC Chair, **Amanda Heinrich**, has already ramped us up for this year with a calendar full of great events to plan and happy-hours to attend! Check out the Child Advocates calendar of events online at [www.childadvocates.org/calendar.htm](http://www.childadvocates.org/calendar.htm) for details on upcoming YPC children's events and socials.

It's time to renew your annual dues if you haven't done so already this year. Log on to [www.childadvocates.org/YPC.htm](http://www.childadvocates.org/YPC.htm) and click "join YPC" to print the necessary form to be submitted with your 2005 dues in the amount of \$35.

Congratulations to event chair **Angie Lapp** for making this year's first Children's Event a huge success! Named *Saddle*



*Up!* for its cowboy and rodeo theme, the event went off without a "hitch" and the kids had a blast getting their pictures taken with the real rodeo participants, learning a little bit of two-stepping and collecting autographs galore.

Active YPC members are encouraged to get involved with all of YPC's events, from the children's events to the socials. Anyone interested in serving on a committee or becoming a member, contact Dena: [dena.miller@childadvocates.org](mailto:dena.miller@childadvocates.org).

# Special Thanks

## GENERAL

Betsy Myers and Karen Pfeifer of Episcopal High School for volunteering with us for two weeks ♦ Dignity-U-Wear for donating clothes and accessories to Gilbert & Rachel's Closet ♦ St. Luke's Episcopal Health Systems for sponsoring families during Thanksgiving and Christmas ♦ The following volunteers who have participated in recent speaking engagements or worked community outreach booths to recruit court appointed advocates: Rosalinda Flores, Nina Friedman, Mike Grove, Quinton Harp, Jill Hunt, Tom Mader, Bonnie McMillan, Alison Meyers, Gail Robusto, Fran Toig, Stephanie Viator and Catherine Wray-McCreight ♦ Joseph Allen for donating a computer and peripherals

## MARATHON

John Picciotto and Penny Wilson for chairing the Hoopla Station and providing coffee and bagels ♦ JoAnn Droluk and Jeffrey Klam for wearing the Rachel and Gilbert costumes at the Hoopla Station ♦ All of the volunteers who helped cheer on runners at our Hoopla Station

## TICKETS

Chick-fil-A for 50 tickets for the EV1.net Houston Bowl as well as prize packs, t-shirts, a visit by Moo the Cow, for taking photographs for the children and for honoring court appointed advocate Carol Appelbaum at the event ♦ EV1.net for Rice football (100) and baseball (30) tickets ♦ Houston Aeros for tickets to several games for our families, volunteers and staff ♦ Gulf States Toyota for Tundra Zone tickets and parking passes to an Aeros game ♦ Theater Under The Stars for 50 tickets to see "Anything Goes" ♦ Benchmark Performance Group for the use of their Toyota Center suite on several occasions ♦ Kenneth Baldwin for Rockets tickets

## FRIENDS OF CHILD ADVOCATES MEMBERSHIP SOCIAL

Mary Kay Gaedcke for granting the use of her home for the membership social ♦ Acute Catering for underwriting the cheese and fruit ♦ Starbucks Coffee for samples of the new Chantico chocolate drink ♦ Brown Paper Chocolates for providing the chocolate tasting ♦ Moet Champagne for providing the champagne ♦ Principessa for providing favors to guests ♦ Richards Liquor, Persona Day Spa, Roula's Nail Spa and Sonia Soto for providing the door prizes ♦ Lexis Florist for donating a floral arrangement

## EXXONMOBIL HOLIDAY PARTY

Nickola Gianake, our ExxonMobil liaison, for her incredible support of the party ♦ Kim Bice/Borden Dairy for donating several thousand drinks ♦ Jennifer Osowski/Whataburger Inc. for donating over 300 cookies ♦ Pastor Polly Standing and the St. Philip's UMC Youth Group for helping with post-party clean-up

# Happenings

FOR DETAILS ON THE THINGS LISTED HERE AND THE LATEST CALENDAR UPDATES, VISIT [WWW.CHILDADVOCATES.ORG/CALENDAR](http://WWW.CHILDADVOCATES.ORG/CALENDAR)

## MARCH

25 Houston Society presents Mamma Mia! benefiting Child Advocates.

31 Young Professionals for Children Social

## APRIL - Child Abuse Prevention Month

2-3 H-E-B Houston Children's Festival benefiting Child Advocates, presented by BP America

22 Gilbert & Rachel's Closet Open House Friday, April 22 from 10-7 PM

26 Houston Press Menu of Menus benefiting Child Advocates.

## MAY

21 13th Annual Pull for Kids Classic

26 Young Professionals for Children Social

# Special Thanks CONTINUED

## ANGELS OF HOPE LUNCHEON AND NEIMAN MARCUS FASHION PRESENTATION

Neiman Marcus for bringing fashion icon Carolina Herrera and presenting her fabulous fashion show ♦ Carolina Herrera for the perfume favors provided to guests ♦ Bevco International for the wine served during lunch ♦ Continental Airlines for the Las Vegas stay in the raffle ♦ Shelly Ann Marks, I. W. Marks Jewelers and Michele Watches for the watch in the raffle ♦ Opus for the champagne party included in the raffle ♦ Tony's for the ladies luncheon for six included in the raffle ♦ Carolina Herrera and Neiman Marcus for the Herrera ensemble in the raffle ♦ Kroger Food Stores for providing lunch for the models ♦ Design at Work for donating the typesetting for the invitation and program ♦ Webb/Mason for underwriting the printing for the invitation and program ♦ Strip House for the benefit reception party prior to the luncheon ♦ Halliburton for underwriting the Strip House invitation design and printing

## YOUNG PROFESSIONALS FOR CHILDREN

Wild West for graciously hosting the *Saddle Up!* event for our kids ♦ SSQQ dance instructors Linda, Paul and Diane for donating their time to teach the kids and YPC volunteers a little two-steppin' ♦ Richard L. Gruen for providing four rodeo clowns for our entertainment

# Board Voice



**KIMBERLY C. COTNER**

**PROFESSIONAL LIFE:**

Assistant Vice President of Finance at Baylor College of Medicine.

**BOARD ROLES AND COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT:**

I joined the Board of Directors in 1999. I have served on the Executive

Committee, Development Committee, the Friends of Child Advocates, and the Child Advocates Endowment Board of Trustees - this year I am serving as the Board Chair.

**WHAT MADE YOU GET INVOLVED WITH CHILD ADVOCATES?**

My dear friend Debbie Martinez introduced me to the organization over ten years ago! She is a true role model when it comes to this organization because she is ALWAYS thinking about Child Advocates in everything she does.

**FAVORITE PASTIMES (BESIDES CHILD ADVOCATES!):**

When I'm not volunteering with Child Advocates, I enjoy hanging out with friends and family, exercising, traveling and working at Baylor College of Medicine!



**DAVID BAIRD, JR.**

**PROFESSIONAL LIFE:**

Owner of BevCo International, an importer and distributor of wines and spirits. My wife and I started BevCo in 2002 following my retirement from ExxonMobil after 30 years with the company in Law and Public Affairs management.

**BOARD ROLES AND COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT:**

Joined Child Advocates Board in 1996. Have served on Executive Committee, Strategic Planning and Community Outreach Committees. Have particularly enjoyed working on the Holiday Party each year.

**WHAT MADE YOU GET INVOLVED WITH CHILD ADVOCATES?**

During my years with ExxonMobil, I was particularly drawn to organizations and activities that address the needs of children (such as Child Advocates) because it is extremely gratifying to have a positive impact on young lives still being shaped and formed. I first volunteered with a Child Advocates organization in Dallas and, because of that experience, was pleased to join Child Advocates when I moved to Houston in 1996.

**FAVORITE PASTIMES (BESIDES CHILD ADVOCATES!):**

Jogging, golf, travel and volunteering with other charitable organizations.

# Board of Directors

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Kim Cotner

**Chair-Elect**

Nancy Thorington

**Executive Committee**

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Hildegard Ballard  
Dolly Dawson Thomas  
Quinton Harp  
Amanda Heinrich  
Bill Livesay  
Brad W. Robbins  
Ellie Sweeney  
Suzanne Thomas  
Mike VanHoozer

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Kenny Baldwin  
John Binick  
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David Davis  
Ellie Francisco  
Nancy Frees Fountain  
Bill Friebel  
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Margaret Kirby  
Reverend William A. Lawson  
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Nolan Lehmann  
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Helen Wheatley  
Penny Wilson

# Spotlight On ...

## H-E-B HOUSTON CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL

Presented by BP America

Designated as "Houston's Official Family Celebration", The H-E-B Houston Children's Festival presented by BP America is gearing up for its 17th year as Houston's favorite family outing with tons of entertainment & fun!

There is so much to do in two fun-packed days! Activities and entertainment will appeal to the whole family. Set in beautiful downtown

Houston on April 2 & 3, the festival

is expected to draw over 75,000 guests.



Special attractions this year include: H-E-Buddy, the National Lumberjack Championships & Sports Camp for Kids, SpongeBob SquarePants and Dora the Explorer, Hibernia Bank Scholarship Treasure Hunt! Please visit our website and calendar of event page for information on volunteering, sponsorship and additional information!

## 13<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL PULL FOR KIDS CLASSIC

Presented by Accenture and honoring BP America.

The Pull for Kids set for May 21, 2005 is one of Houston's classic fundraising events of the year! The Pull, consisting of a daytime sporting clays tournament and a casual, Saturday night party complete with dinner, dancing, and incredible auction items promises to remain the most talked about event of the year! This year's event - *I Believe I Can Fly* - will be chaired by Mrs. Susan Whitney and held in an airplane hangar at Bush Intercontinental Airport, with hopes of raising more than \$500,000 for Child Advocates.

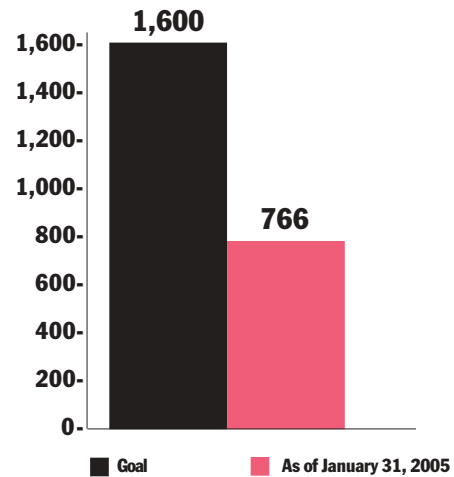
Money raised by the Pull for Kids Classic, the organization's largest fundraiser, will be used to recruit, train and support volunteers, who serve as court appointed advocates for children in custody.

The 2005 Pull for Kids Classic will honor BP America for their unprecedented and dedicated support of our mission, and the event is being presented by Accenture, a leading global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company and a long time Child Advocates supporter.

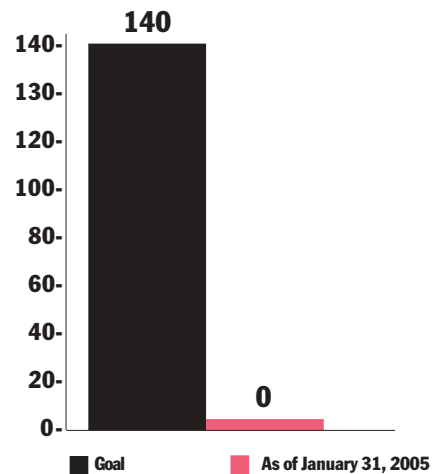
For more information, please contact Andrea at 713-529-1396 ext. 214 or e-mail [andrea.dulany@childadvocates.org](mailto:andrea.dulany@childadvocates.org).

# Goal Review

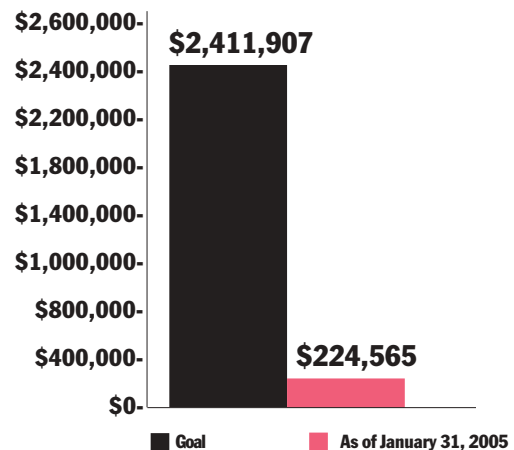
## CHILDREN SERVED



## VOLUNTEERS TRAINED



## BUDGET RAISED



# Thrive

## JOHN KREBS - A BIG MAN WITH AN EVEN BIGGER HEART

As told by Barbara Bray, foster / adoptive parent

*Our family met John Krebs when he was assigned to the case of four little girls as their court appointed advocate. We were the foster placement for the girls while their case went through the system.*

*From his very first day on the case, he worked with the girls' parents to help them have their children returned. He worked long hours to find them a therapist who would not only take their case for free, but would see them after-hours so that they wouldn't miss work. John even called to remind them so they didn't miss an appointment. He recommended they move closer to the father's job to get away from the drugs and help save money on gas. He also arranged for them to have help making grocery lists and aide with planning meals.*

*It worked out for a while, but old habits crept back into their lives and another baby was on the way. John was key in having this child placed in our home as well. As the case approached midway, he had exhausted all family members as being able to care for the children.*

*Several times, "Big John", as the children refer to him, came to our house bringing storybooks to give to them. He would end up sitting on the floor covered with children in his lap while he read to them or colored pictures with them. He would sometimes bring his camera, which I don't know how it survived, to take pictures and instead the kids would be snapping the shots.*

*With kind words, hugs and a little extra attention, John has helped us show five children how to once again laugh and smile. They don't forget the past, but they are learning that things can be better. With church, an education, family and special friends like Big John, they have a new beginning.*

*On October 23, 2003, we adopted all five children with the help of John Krebs. It has been an honor to have him in our home.*

*God bless you, Big John.*

*The Bray Family*



**childadvocates.**

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