

# HEARTLAND CASA NEWSLETTER



## Executive Director's Note

AS WE MOVE INTO THE HEART OF FALL AND PREPARE FOR OUR HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS GALA, I'M REMINDED DAILY OF THE INCREDIBLE DEDICATION OF OUR TEAM AND VOLUNTEERS. EACH OF YOU CONTINUES TO BRING WARMTH, COMPASSION, AND RESILIENCE TO THE WORK WE DO ON BEHALF OF CHILDREN IN CARE.

THIS SEASON ALSO BROUGHT SOME JOY OUTSIDE THE OFFICE—OUR OUTINGS TO RADER FAMILY FARM IN BLOOMINGTON WERE A BLAST AND A GREAT REMINDER THAT HAVING FUN TOGETHER FUELS THE IMPORTANT WORK WE DO. AND A BIG CONGRATULATIONS TO LEANNE ON HER MARRIAGE! WE'RE SO HAPPY FOR YOU.

THANK YOU FOR SHOWING UP WITH HEART—FOR YOUR LONG HOURS, YOUR FLEXIBILITY, AND YOUR UNWAVERING BELIEF THAT EVERY CHILD DESERVES A VOICE AND A SAFE, STABLE HOME. I'M ESPECIALLY GRATEFUL FOR HOW SUPPORTIVE OUR TEAM IS OF ONE ANOTHER: YOU CELEBRATE EACH OTHER'S WINS, STEP IN WITHOUT BEING ASKED, AND LIFT EACH OTHER UP ON THE HARD DAYS. THE STRENGTH OF HEARTLAND CASA TRULY LIES IN THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE.

WITH GRATITUDE,  
BLAINE SMITH  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HEARTLAND CASA

## HAPPY 6 YEAR 'CASA'VERSARY CASANDRA BLOCKTON

THIS MONTH, WE CELEBRATE CASANDRA BLOCKTON FOR SIX YEARS OF INCREDIBLE SERVICE TO HEARTLAND CASA! CASANDRA'S COMMITMENT TO ADVOCATING FOR CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING OUR ADVOCATES HAS MADE A LASTING IMPACT ACROSS EVERY COUNTY WE SERVE. HER COMPASSION, PROFESSIONALISM, AND HUMOR BRING LIGHT TO OUR OFFICE EVERY SINGLE DAY.

PLEASE JOIN US IN THANKING CASANDRA FOR HER YEARS OF DEDICATION AND EXCELLENCE! ❤️



## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS!

LET'S CELEBRATE OUR OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS AND ALL  
THE JOY THEY BRING TO OUR CASA FAMILY: 

- BLAINE SMITH – OCTOBER 8
- CASANDRA BLOCKTON – OCTOBER 17
- BEV WHITE – OCTOBER 17

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO EACH OF YOU! MAY THIS YEAR  
BRING CONTINUED PURPOSE, LAUGHTER, AND  
MOMENTS OF REST AMID THE IMPORTANT WORK WE  
DO. 

## Upcoming Events

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MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	
		15 Taylorville Daily News Radio Interview	16	17 CASA Paint Party 3p-5p	18	19	
20 October Information Meeting at Taylorville Library	21 Board Meeting 12p	22	23 Prevent Child Abuse Conference	24	25	26	
27 Halloween Party Taylorville Fire Dept.	28	29	30	31			
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
10	11 Veterans DAY	12	13	14	15	16	

# JOIN US FOR TBRI TRAINING!

**Friday, November 7th**

**9:00 AM – 5:00 PM**

**Location: Heartland CASA Office**

## **WHAT IS TBRI?**

- Trauma-informed and evidence-based caregiving model
- Designed to meet complex needs of children who have experienced adversity, abuse, neglect, or trauma
- Equips caregivers and professionals with practical tools
- Aims to build trust, foster connections, and support children's healing

## **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT**

- Children who have experienced trauma often struggle with trust, emotional regulation, and healthy relationships
- Traditional approaches to discipline and care often fail to meet their unique needs
- Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI®) equips caregivers, advocates, and community members with strategies to:
  - Build safety and trust so children can feel secure
  - Foster meaningful connections that support healing
  - Provide practical tools for managing challenging behaviors



# Remembering Naithan



NAITHAN R. FLESCH, 18, OF DECATUR, IL, PASSED AWAY PEACEFULLY SURROUNDED BY FAMILY AND FRIENDS ON AUGUST 4, 2025, AT CARLE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL IN URBANA, IL.

BORN JUNE 19, 2007 IN DECATUR, IL. GOD CHOSE MIKE AND JENNIFER FLESCH TO BE HIS PARENTS A FEW MONTHS AFTER HIS BIRTH. NAITHAN WAS PRECEDED IN DEATH BY HIS PARENTS., GRANDPARENTS C.D. (STUB) AND SUE HOHENSTEIN, AND GRANDPARENT SANDRA FLESCH.

NAITHAN WAS TRULY A SPECIAL YOUNG MAN, A PRECIOUS GIFT FROM GOD. NAITHAN WAS A BEACON OF LIGHT TO EVERYONE WHO MET HIM. HIS EXCITEMENT WAS CONTAGIOUS! A VIBRANT SOUL, NAITHAN WAS KNOWN FOR HIS INFECTIOUS LAUGHTER AND KIND HEART. HE ENJOYED LISTENING TO MUSIC AND GOING ON CAR RIDES. NAITHAN LOVED THE OUTSIDE. HE ATTENDED PERSHING EARLY LEARNING CENTER, WILLIAM HARRIS SCHOOL, HOPE ACADEMY, STEPHEN DECATUR MIDDLE SCHOOL, AND SWANN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES. HIS SMILE WAS A SOURCE OF JOY, BRIGHTENING EVERY ROOM.

HE LOVED SPENDING TIME WITH JESSICA AND ALYSSA. LAUGHS WERE ALWAYS A GIVEN! HE TREASURED HIS VISITS WITH JENNIFER FROM CASA AND LOVED HER BUBBLY PERSONALITY. HE ALWAYS KNEW DEANNA WAS CHECKING IN ON HIM AND MAKING SURE HE WAS WELL TAKEN CARE OF. NAITHAN KEPT EVERYONE ON THEIR TOES.

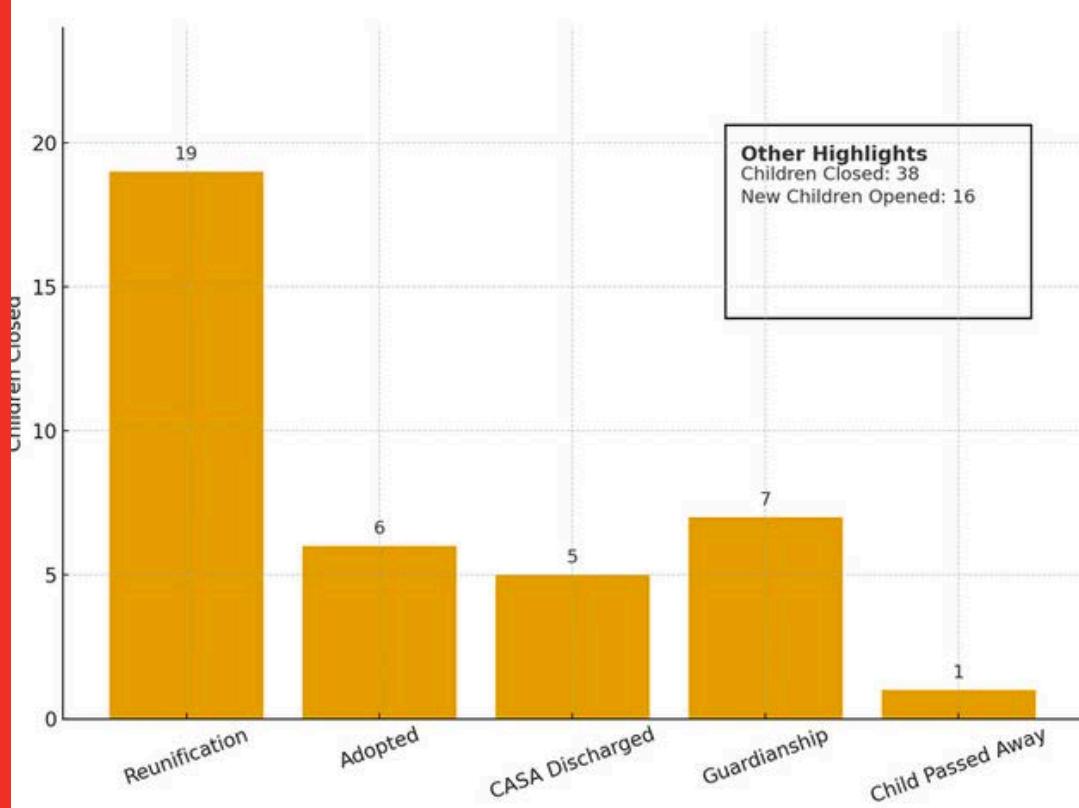
NAITHAN WILL BE DEARLY MISSED. NAITHAN'S PRESENCE HAS FILLED OUR LIVES WITH WARMTH. ON BEHALF OF THE FAMILY, MANY THANKS TO THE ICU STAFF AT CARLE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL AND SWANN SPECIAL CARE FOR THEIR COMPASSIONATE CARE FOR NAITHAN.

NAITHAN'S GENEROUS SPIRIT CONTINUED EVEN AFTER HIS PASSING. HE WAS AN ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR THROUGH GIFT OF HOPE, PROVIDING LIFE AND IMPROVING THE LIVES OF MANY INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR FAMILIES. THIS SELFLESS ACT ENSURES HIS LEGACY OF KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY WILL CONTINUE. THE IMPACT NAITHAN HAS BROUGHT TO SO MANY LIVES CAN NEVER BE MEASURED OR FORGOTTEN. HIS MEMORY WILL BE CHERISHED FOREVER.

IN LIEU OF FLOWERS, THE FAMILY REQUESTS THAT DONATIONS BE MADE IN HIS MEMORY TO MACON COUNTY CASA OR SWANN SPECIAL CARE.

## 353 Children Served

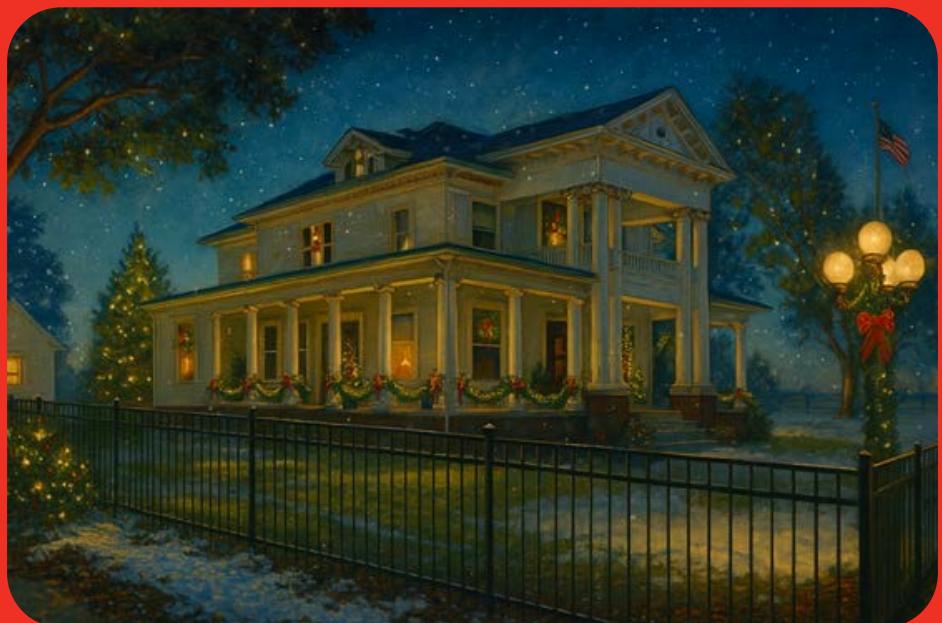
Heartland CASA • July 1 - Sept 30, 2025



# HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS GALA

*Experience of the Season*

*Get your tickets now!*



## Home for the Holidays Baked Goods Auction

A big thank you to our amazing bakers:  
Jo & Co Bakery • Mama Bear Bakery  
620h75



♥ You make the season sweeter  
for local children in foster care.

Want to join the fun?

- Donate a signature baked good for the gala!

Visit [www.iheartcasa.org/gala](http://www.iheartcasa.org/gala)  
or message us here to sign up!

Osbern Mansion  
VIP Cocktail Hour 6 pm  
Single ticket: \$100  
Double ticket: \$175  
Table of 8: \$700

Osbern Acres  
Event Hall  
Dinner 7 pm  
Single ticket: 75  
Double ticket: 125  
Table of 8: \$500



[www.iheartcasa.org/gala](http://www.iheartcasa.org/gala)