

# THE PINWHEEL



## Congrats 2018 Executive Board

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Newly-elected officers to serve on the 2018 Executive Board of the Children's Advocacy Center of the Coastal Bend are:

**President** - Joe Benavides, Nueces County Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1, Place 1

**Vice President** - Dr. Sandra Clement, Principal of Moody High School

**Treasurer** - Ambar Qureshi, Director of Operations for Superior Health Plan

**Secretary** - Benjamin Morin, Retired English Professor, Del Mar College and Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

By Clarissa Mora

Despite hardship for many due to Hurricane Harvey in the counties we serve, 2017 was still filled with many blessings for the CACCB. As we turn our attention to 2018, we know in our hearts that it's going to be a tremendous year!

With the generosity of many matching funders during the Coastal Bend Day of Giving (Nov. 14), we secured \$32,728.34 to carry us into the new year.

We're also grateful for recent donations from the Kleberg County District Attorney's Office (\$10,000), the King Ranch Family Trust (\$11,450) and Al Gonzalez with AGE Refining, Inc., in Dallas (\$5,000) to help grow our services and programs.

Our Girls' Teen Support Group will start again on February 6, 2018 - our 6th class group. Thanks to funding from Valero, we have been able to build these support services and empower teen girls in our community to reach their fullest potential during this free six-week program.

But we could not undertake these challenges without our valuable staff. Please welcome new employees: Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper Elizabeth Eguia, Forensic Interviewer Veronica Olivarez, Therapist Mischele Maglothin and MEP Intake Coordinator Cheryl Parker to the team and let's make 2018 the best year ever!

## SAVE THE DATE: ROAST FUNDRAISER IS APRIL 5

The Board of Directors and Staff of the CACCB are delighted to announce that the 5th Annual Roast Fundraiser will be held on Thursday, April 5, at the Corpus Christi Country Club. This year, we'll be roasting Port of Corpus Christi Commissioner Barbara Canales. The event, which is held during Child Abuse Prevention Month, will also include dinner and a silent auction.

For sponsorships/table information, call (361) 855-9058.



## PARTNER PROFILE: HEATH HARDWICK

One of the CACCB's most dedicated partners who often assists with fundraisers, shows support at events and gives area presentations for children is Heath Hardwick, Special Agent, Homeland Security Investigations.



He teamed up with the CACCB in March 2015, when his investigation required a forensic interviewer.

Previously, he worked with the Midland Child Advocacy Center and attended their MDT meetings.

"Based on what I knew about the MDT process, I knew I wanted to work with the CACCB as soon as I arrived," said Hardwick. "I truly appreciate the CACCB allowing me to help protect and serve the children of the Coastal Bend."

Hardwick believes in the work of the CACCB. "I am really excited to see the CACCB grow and make an impact in the lives of children," he said. "The CACCB is a fantastic organization dedicated to the protection, assistance, and care of children; and, because of that, I want to be a part of that team effort."





# STAFF NEWS

## MEET OUR TEAM

Photo taken at the CACCB Christmas party held December 20, 2017, at Katz 21 Steak and Spirits.

**(Top row, 1 to r):** Karen Emero, Family Advocate; Laura Alaniz, MEP Program Coordinator; Sharra Rodriguez, Family Advocate; Elizabeth Eguia, Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper; Arianne Chapa, Forensic Interviewer/Family Advocate; Emma Sais, Program Director; Veronica Olivarez, Forensic Interviewer; and Cassandra Hinojosa, Community Education Specialist

**(Bottom row, 1 to r):** Lily Ramos, Forensic Interviewer; Clarissa Mora, Executive Director; Mischele Maglothin, Therapist; and Penny Green, Forensic Interviewer. (Not pictured: Cheryl Parker, MEP Intake Coordinator)

## MADE WITH LOVE BY LEOTA GAINES



Leota Gaines has crafted more than 5,000 stuffed animals since 2008, after her husband passed away. Each handmade creation - cats, elephants, turtles, bears, dogs and ducks in a variety of colorful prints - takes her nearly three hours to complete and no two stuffed animals are alike.

Leota, who donates and drops-off these plush playpals to Driscoll Children's Hospital, the Ronald McDonald House, the Purple Door (formerly the Women's Shelter of South Texas), and the Flour Bluff Volunteer Fire Department, has added the Children's Advocacy Center of the Coastal Bend to her growing list.

At age 6, Leota's paternal grandmother taught her how to sew. Leota was too short to reach the pedals, so her grandmother tied cigar boxes to her feet with bale wire as an easy fix.

Leota, a former foster parent who turned 86 last month, says she loves children and that sewing the stuffed animals brings her great joy.

"I cannot just sit here and do nothing," she said. "If there's anything I can do to help a child, I'll do it, because children are our future."

## UPCOMING DATES

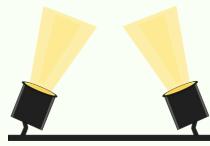
Feb. 19: CACCB Closed for President's Day

April 5: Roast Fundraiser

For details, follow us on Facebook; or call the Center at (361) 855-9058.

# DONATIONS & DONORS

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT: DEAN FRITSCH



When it comes to helping children, Dean Fritsch has a huge heart. The owner of Texas Toyz has proven his friendship to the CACCB since fall 2015.

In October 2017, he organized the 6th annual Corpus Christi Zombie Walk with proceeds benefiting the CACCB.

The following month, he presented the Center with a check for \$1,517.39. He generously provided resources for the CACCB's Pinwheels awareness event in September, to have comic superheroes entertain and pose for photos with kids. He has also volunteered his time to assist the Center on last-minute projects and has brought in more than \$2,500 in



toys and comic books to children we serve during the holiday season.

## LITHIA 4 KIDS GIVES \$5,000 TO CACCB

Corpus Christi's Access Ford and Lithia Chrysler, Jeep and Dodge have provided the CACCB with a \$5,000 sponsorship through the Lithia 4 Kids Initiative to support programs that focus on youth development and have a positive community impact.

"It is heartbreaking that we have to have an organization specifically designated toward abused children," said Meghann Erickson, Community Relations Coordinator for Lithia Motors, Inc. "We are saddened yet grateful of the work the CAC does for our local youth."

"Educate, Advocate, Support and Strengthen" are the pillars of the Lithia 4Kids initiative.



## COASTAL BEND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AWARDS CHECK TO CACCB



On December 13, 2017, the Coastal Bend Community Foundation presented the CACCB with a check for \$32,728.24 during a ceremony for area non-profits who participated in the 9th annual Day of Giving event held in November. A total of 46 organizations divided more than \$2.3 million dollars to assist their charity. Staff members and Board President Joe Benavides attended the event.

"Being a part of this yearly effort has really helped the Center flourish and has also allowed our community to become more engaged in giving to the non-profits of their choice," said Executive Director Clarissa Mora. "We hope our Center will be selected to participate again next year."