

Quilters Guild of Plano teams up with CASA



"Handprints of Hope"

When CASA of Collin County and the Quilters Guild of Plano put their hands and hearts together to create awareness of the 600 abused and neglected children in the community, they got just that – 600 little hands forming five hearts on a quilt bursting with color.

The whirl of sewing machines broke the stillness of Schimelpfenig Library one Saturday when the guild's Carrie Oransky and Janet Lindsey led a team of quilters in stitching the 6'-by-10' quilt. Donated fabric, six hours of time and dexterity, and an immeasurable love for children amounted to more than 1,400 multi-hued squares and handprints of different sizes.

The quilt, "Handprints for Hope," brought together CASA board members, Quilters Guild members, and Collin County children including the Girl Scouts, Pride of Plano 4H members, and St. Paul's Christian School.

"The idea for the quilt took seed in the spring of 2004, with the vision that displaying it around the community would generate awareness about our organization and the children we serve," said Sheila Brown, board president for CASA of Collin County.

"Handprints of Hope" will make its debut at the Labors of Love Quilt Show Sept. 2 - 3. (see page 14) The quilt will continually be on tour as an educational tool at venues such as the Collin County Council on Family Violence, Collin

County Community College, and the Texas CASA conference. The quilt will not be for sale.

CASA, which stands for Court Appointed Special Advocates, trains community volunteers to serve as guardians for children who have been victims of abuse and neglect. More than 80 percent of CASA's caseload is children under the age of 12.

Kenneth Alexander, development director for CASA of Collin County, said, "The ultimate purpose of the quilt is to let individuals in Collin County understand and be aware of CASA and our efforts to help the kids in the community."

All of our efforts become pieces of hope for Collin County's children. For more information on CASA, visit www.casaofcollincounty.org.