



chamberchatter

A Publication of the Shelby County Chamber of Commerce

March 2020

Local Rotarians Commemorate 100 Years,
Recall Storied Past

10



4



2020 Chamber Awards Gala successful

Local media team continues to 'dig deep' into local news

7



Johnson & Shelby County VASIA: Volunteer Advocates
for Seniors & Incapacitated Adults

8





Johnson & Shelby County VASIA: Volunteer Advocates for Seniors & Incapacitated Adults

The mission of the Johnson & Shelby County VASIA Program is to assist seniors and incapacitated adults through a public guardianship program. We are made up of a team of volunteer advocates who allow those seniors and incapacitated persons in need, the highest degree of independence, while assisting them in gaining the greatest degree of health, comfort and safety.

VASIA serves incapacitated adults over the age of 18 years old and seniors. Those served will be diagnosed by a licensed physician as being mentally or medically incapacitated. The protected person served by VASIA of Johnson & Shelby County will also be without a willing, able or suitable relative or significant person to serve as guardian. A county judge must then rule the person needs guardianship and assigns them to VASIA.

In conjunction with national standards, Indiana established guardianship standards as counties began addressing the needs of adult citizens much in the same way that CASA was addressing the needs of children. Under the leadership of Superior Court No.1 Judge Barton, Joe

Erickson began Johnson County VASIA in November 2016. The program is funded through a State VASIA Grant and Johnson County. Although the program is still young and growing, concerned people in Shelby County were interested in providing this same care to their citizens in need. Johnson County VASIA has now become Johnson & Shelby County VASIA and received support in 2020 from Shelbyville City Council, Blue River Community Foundation and judicial oversight from Judge Meltzer.

With the expansion of the program, Lauren Rynerson joined VASIA part-time in 2019 while working full-time as the Business Office Manager at Hickory Creek at Franklin. Lauren became the Executive Director of VASIA in January 2020 while Joe Erickson remains part-time as a Guardian Case Manager.

The population of those in need of a guardian may include but are not limited to, people with dementia, Alzheimer's, mental illness, substance abuse issues, traumatic brain injury, autism and any other incapacity that limits the person's ability to make decisions about their financial and personal medical care.

Johnson & Shelby County VASIA

5 East Jefferson Street
Franklin, IN 46131
(317) 346-4414

There are a number of ways you can support adults 18 and over who have guardianship needs. One is to refer potential protected persons by contacting the VASIA office. Referrals for Guardianship may be made by an interested person or organization in the community. Another is to consider becoming a volunteer advocate. You can also support VASIA by participating in community fundraisers.

Please join VASIA on March 17th for a Shelby County Chamber ribbon cutting. The ceremony will be held in Judge Meltzer's courtroom at 11:30 a.m.

