

## **Chili cook-off raises \$255 for KECC**

*By Anya Armes Weber*

Staff at Frankfort's Cabinet for Human Resources building raised \$255 for the Kentucky Employees Charitable Campaign (KECC) with a chili cook-off last week.

Hungry staff could choose from 13 hot and delicious entries. A \$3 donation to KECC got staff a bowl of chili, and a \$3 minimum donation per paycheck made staff eligible to win tickets to a University of Kentucky or A University of Louisville football game.

Chili diners voting for the "People's Choice Award" for best chili selected the dish of Karen Cantrell from the Office of Health Policy.

UK ticket winners were Renee Close of the Department for Community Based Services and Kelli Hayes of the Secretary's Office.

UofL ticket winners were Kathy Doyle in the Office of Administrative and Technology Services and Tara Wilson in the Office of the Inspector General.

## **Recipes needed for KECC cookbook**

KECC needs your recipes! The KECC committee is compiling a KECC cookbook. Participants of a recent cook-off will be spotlighted in the book along with recipes submitted by employees.

Staff can submit recipes for inclusion in the book to Kellye Cheek at [KellyeF.Cheek@ky.gov](mailto:KellyeF.Cheek@ky.gov). The deadline is Friday, Sept. 25. Books will go on sale in October.

## **Flu Level Raised to 'Widespread' in Kentucky**

The Kentucky Department for Public Health last week reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that the state's flu activity level has increased

from regional to widespread. Widespread activity is the highest level of flu activity, which indicates increased flu-like activity or flu outbreaks in at least half of the regions in a state. The activity levels for states are tracked weekly as part of the CDC's national flu surveillance system. This level of flu activity is consistent with other southeastern states that are also currently reporting widespread activity.

"Having widespread flu activity being reported in Kentucky is very unusual in mid-September," said William D. Hacker, M.D., commissioner of DPH. "This high level of activity so early in the flu season is mainly due to the H1N1 virus circulating, not the seasonal flu. We are urging individuals to get vaccinated against seasonal flu now and also receive an H1N1 vaccination when the vaccine begins to arrive in Kentucky, which should be by mid-October. Because initial supplies of the H1N1 vaccine may be limited, vaccine administration will be recommended first for priority groups based on those most at risk, according to the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices."

Hacker said the priority groups for the H1N1 vaccine include: people who are more likely to suffer complications from H1N1 flu, including pregnant women; people who live or care for children younger than 6 months of age; direct care health care and emergency medical services personnel; people between the ages of 6 months and 24 years old; and people from ages 25 through 64 years with chronic health conditions.

Hacker urges anyone who hasn't received a seasonal flu vaccine, particularly those in the groups at high risk for complications related to the flu, to contact their local health departments or health care provider about getting a flu shot. Healthy people age 2 through 49 years can get flu immunizations administered by nasal spray. Older Kentuckians should also consider getting

the pneumococcal pneumonia vaccine.

Because the flu can spread easily among people in close contact and H1N1 has been more common in young people, health officials say it is especially important for those in school, day care or similar settings to practice good hygiene habits during the coming months. Common sense precautions to prevent illness include: avoiding close contact with those who are ill; staying home when sick; covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing; avoiding touching the eyes, nose or mouth; and frequent hand washing.

The symptoms of both seasonal and H1N1 flu include fever, chills, headache, sore throat, cough, body aches and many include vomiting or diarrhea. Individuals at higher risk for complications – such as those with chronic health conditions or who are pregnant – should contact a health care provider early, in case treatment with antiviral medication is necessary.

For more information on H1N1 flu, visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov). Individuals can also visit <http://healthalerts.ky.gov> for information on H1N1 and Kentucky, or follow KYHealthAlerts on Twitter to be notified when new information is posted at the Web site.

### **2010 KEHP Open Enrollment Information**

Open Enrollment for the Kentucky Employees Health Plan will be Monday, Oct. 12, through Sunday, Oct. 25. Each member must enroll in a health insurance, flexible spending account (FSA) or health reimbursement account (HRA) plan. Current health insurance elections will not roll over to 2010.

Several benefit fairs for employees have been scheduled from Oct. 1-15.

Members will have the opportunity to enroll online at select benefit fair locations. (This is

a pilot program, so this service is not available at all fairs.)

Employee ID letters will be mailed to KEHP members around Sept. 23. Employee password letters will be mailed around Sept. 25.

Benefit fairs are as follows:

#### **Oct. 1**

Franklin County  
8 a.m.-6 p.m.  
Frankfort Convention Center  
405 Mero St.  
Frankfort

Boyd County  
2-6 p.m.  
Boyd County Middle School Theater  
1226 Summit Road  
Ashland

#### **Oct. 5**

McCracken County  
2-6 p.m.  
Western Kentucky Community and Technical College  
Crouse Hall Atrium  
4810 Alben Barkley Drive  
Paducah

Kenton County  
2-6 p.m.  
Northern Kentucky Area Development District  
22 Spiral Drive  
Florence

#### **Oct. 6**

Calloway County  
2-6 p.m.  
Calloway County Board of Education  
Board Meeting Room  
2110 College Farm Road  
Murray

Rowan County  
2-6 p.m.  
Rowan County Board of Education  
Central Office Board Room

121 East Second St.  
Morehead

**Oct. 7**

Christian County  
2-6 p.m.  
Christian County Board of Education Board  
Room  
200 Glass Ave.  
Hopkinsville

Boyle County  
2-6 p.m.  
Inter-County Energy Cooperative  
1009 Hustonville Road  
Danville

**Oct. 8**

Hopkins County  
2-6 p.m.  
Madisonville North Hopkins High School  
Library  
4515 Hanson Road  
Madisonville

Madison County  
2-6 p.m.  
Madison Central High School Cafeteria  
705 N. Second St.  
Richmond

**Oct. 12**

Floyd County (Computer Kiosks)  
2-6 p.m.  
Prestonsburg Elementary Library  
140 S. Clark Road  
Prestonsburg

Pulaski County (Computer Kiosks)  
2-6 p.m.  
The Center for Rural Development  
2292 Hwy. 27 South  
Somerset

**Oct. 13**

Warren County (Computer Kiosks)  
2- p.m.  
Greenwood High School Library  
5065 Scottsville Road  
Bowling Green

Laurel County (Computer Kiosks)  
2-6 p.m.  
G.C. Garland Administration Building  
London Elementary School Campus  
710 N. Main St.  
London

**Oct. 14**

Fayette County (Computer Kiosks)  
4-8 p.m.  
Dunbar High School Cafeteria  
1600 Man O War Blvd.  
Lexington

Daviess County (Computer Kiosks)  
2-6 p.m.  
Fairfield Inn Conference Room  
800 Salem Dr.  
Owensboro

**Oct. 15**

Jefferson County  
8 a.m.-6 p.m.  
Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center West  
Hall Meeting Rooms 1 & 2  
Louisville

Nelson County (Computer Kiosks)  
2-6 p.m.  
Nelson County High Library  
1070 Bloomfield Road  
Bardstown

**Living Well: Create a Plan**

Can you be successful in achieving your weight loss goals? The answer is yes, you can! If you have previously or are currently struggling with your weight, Martica Heaner, writer for MSN Health and Fitness, provides some easy steps to successful weight loss.

**Step One** – Write down everything you eat or drink for three days a week. This food diary will help identify specific eating patterns and allow you to spot areas where you can improve.

**Step Two** - Take time to learn skills to improve your diet. Start with healthy recipes, nutritious shopping and planning ahead for meals.

**Step Three** - Walk more. If you have a busy schedule, walking more is the best way to squeeze in fitness. Schedule walking breaks on your computer calendar and walk with your family or a friend after work.

The simple answer to weight loss is creating a plan that will work for you. However, following step one will give you a visual, concrete reference to your current eating habits and behaviors. Analyzing these behaviors will give you some insight on where improvement is needed as well as help you identify behaviors you are not aware of. For example: Do you snack without realizing it? Do you overeat when you are stressed? Do you skip meals? How many sodas or empty calories do you consume in one day? All of these questions will help you identify behaviors that trigger overeating or bad choices. Weight loss is not easy work, but by creating an individualized plan, you will have a direct set of guidelines to follow and a set plan to return to if you fall back into old habits.

## **Employee Enrichment**

*By Anya Armes Weber*

Here's another way you can recognize September as National Employee Wellness Month – exercise at your desk. Try this move from Men's Health magazine.

The “serratus shrug” focuses on a muscle called the serratus anterior, which runs along your rib cage under your arm pit, and it helps you sit straighter and feel stronger.

Here's how to do the shrug:

- Sit upright on a chair and place your hands flat on the sitting surface next to your hips.
- Completely straighten your arms and lock your elbows.
- Relax your upper back muscles and allow your torso to sink between your shoulders.
- Press your shoulders down as you lift your upper body, as if you were doing a reverse shoulder shrug.
- Pause for five seconds, then lower your body back to the starting position. That's one rep. Repeat as you are able.