

Black History Month Celebration Pays Tribute to Kentucky Leader

In celebration of February as Black History Month, an event was held in the Capitol Rotunda last week that included a tribute to the late Kentucky Supreme Court Justice William E. McAnulty Jr.

A bust of Justice McAnulty, the first African-American member of Kentucky's Supreme Court, was unveiled and dedicated during the celebration in the Capitol Rotunda. Justice McAnulty died in August 2007 at age 59.

"As the first African-American man to serve on the Kentucky Supreme Court, Justice McAnulty blazed the trail for increased diversity in our judicial branch and beyond," said Gov. Steve Beshear. "Currently, there is greater diversity in courtrooms, classrooms and businesses across the state than ever before seen in our history. The vision, compassion and integrity he possessed serves as an example for all Kentuckians as we continue to fight for economic access and social justice regardless of race, class or gender."

During the celebration, Gov. Beshear also presented a gubernatorial proclamation declaring February Black History Month in Kentucky.

"Black History Month is a chance to reflect on the resilience and spirit of the African-American community and the unmatched influence leaders have had on the American fiber," said Gov. Beshear. "I encourage all Kentuckians to use this month as an opportunity to learn more about your favorite historical figure, cultural leader or African-American artist and to recommit yourself to working toward equal opportunity for all."

Life Insurance Carrier Changes

The state recently changed its life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment carrier. Effective Jan. 1, Nationwide Life Insurance Company became the new provider for life insurance coverage.

Basic life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment insurance in the amount of \$20,000 are provided to state employees free of charge by the Commonwealth. Additional coverage for employees and family members is optional. There will be an open enrollment April 1 through April 30 for this insurance. Rates for additional insurance have not changed from the previous carrier. For more information, visit <http://personnel.ky.gov/emprel/gli/>.

Support KSP, Kids; Win a New Car

The Kentucky State Police (KSP) is rolling out a classic 60s muscle car updated for the 21st century for its Trooper Island fund-raising raffle this year: the 2010 Chevrolet Camaro (1LT Coupe).

Tickets are \$10 each and are available from any state police post or by sending a check for \$10 per ticket and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Kentucky State Police, Media Relations Branch, 919 Versailles Road, Frankfort, KY 40601. Checks should be made out to Trooper

Island. The winning ticket will be drawn on Aug. 29 at the Kentucky State Fair. (Raffle winner is responsible for all tax and license fees.)

Trooper Island is a free summer camp for underprivileged boys and girls ages 10-12 operated by the Kentucky State Police on Dale Hollow Lake in Clinton County. It is financed entirely by donations; no public funds are used. Each year, the camp hosts approximately 700 children, providing good food, fresh air, recreation, guidance and structured, esteem-building activities designed to build good citizenship and positive relationships with law enforcement officers. For more information, visit the [KSP Trooper Island Web page](#).

Kentucky Receives \$2 Million for e-Health Project

Kentucky has received more than \$2 million to plan an incentive program for Medicaid health care providers to implement electronic health record systems in their practices. The money, part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), was awarded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Ultimately, Kentucky plans to provide monetary incentives to the state's Medicaid providers to enhance electronic record-keeping efforts. Electronic health records (EHRs) are expected to improve the quality and efficiency of health care by providing a statewide e-health network that would make it easier to store, access and share health records.

The Commonwealth will receive approximately \$2.6 million in federal matching funds. Kentucky will use these funds for planning activities that include conducting a comprehensive analysis to determine the current status of health information technology (HIT) activities in the state.

As part of that process, Kentucky will gather information on issues such as existing barriers to its use of EHRs, provider eligibility for EHR incentive payments, and the creation of a state Medicaid HIT Plan, which will define the state's vision for long-term HIT use. Kentucky was one of a handful of states to receive this funding from CMS for HIT planning efforts.

Living Well: What Resolutions?

Have Super Bowl parties, Valentine's Day and Mardi Gras plans forced you to postpone your New Year's resolutions of weight loss and healthier eating? Thinking that maybe once the weather warms up you will head out and start walking? If that's what you're thinking, it's time to reevaluate your 2010 goals. What brought you to set goals a little more than a month ago? Were your clothes shrinking after each wash? Were your kids unable to identify common fruits and vegetable in the produce section because you don't serve them at home? (Yes, I admit this happened to me once.) It's time to remind yourself why you made a conscious decision to make changes in your lifestyle in 2010.

In December 2009, I got a great deal and joined a gym. I wanted to stay active when the winter weather didn't cooperate with my schedule. My new membership also came with a free (sales

pitch to purchase personal training sessions) personal training session in which they took my weight, body fat percentage, nutritional information and previous exercise habits. I have always enjoyed being active so I thought I would breeze through the “counseling” part of the session. But I found out I have several things to improve on.

While I didn’t buy the training package, I did make a promise to myself to eat better and start a regular strength training program. I am guilty of putting things off if my schedule starts filling up; exercise seems to be the first thing compromised. To break this habit, I have made two changes to my weekly routine. First, I now create a grocery list that incorporates some easy healthy meals, and I try not to stray too far from my list. (Previously, I was buying cookie dough ice cream and eating the entire carton by the middle of the week.) Second, I am taking full advantage of the deal I got on my gym membership. I even meet a friend at least once a week at 6 a.m. I haven’t had too much trouble getting up and working out at that hour, but knowing I am meeting someone who is making the same commitment is helpful.

If you’ve started to disregard your goals for this year, it’s time to rethink and recharge them. Everyone will suffer some setbacks. The most important thing to remember is that you are making a lifestyle change. Change does not happen overnight or without effort. But sticking to your plans regarding a healthy lifestyle should bring you added self-confidence and a feeling of accomplishment. Don’t give up. Keep trying, and if you get stuck, remind yourself why you wanted to make changes in January to help you get back on track.

CHFS Health Tip of the Week

Taking preventive action is your best defense against having to deal with extreme cold-weather conditions. By preparing your home and car in advance for winter emergencies, and by observing safety precautions during times of extremely cold weather, you can reduce the risk of weather-related health problems.

Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Web site for tips on winter weather tips: <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/takesteps/>.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Did you receive flowers this Valentine’s Day? Enjoy them! They may be more than just a token of love. A Harvard study shows they can also improve your general well-being.

The 2006 study “The Home Ecology of Flowers” surveyed 54 adults who lived for one week with a “home décor” item. For half of participants it was fresh flowers, for the others, it was a “control” item, like a painting. The participants self-reported their emotions and attitudes.

The study had three main findings.

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Flowers nourish kindness. Study members who lived with flowers felt an increase in feelings of compassion.

Flowers ease your worry. Participants felt less negative after being around flowers. Most participants placed the flowers in a place where they would be the first thing to see in the morning.

Flowers at home can make work life better. Participants who had flowers at home were more likely to have more energy and enthusiasm for their work.

Take pleasure in your Valentine's Day flowers and the positive impact they may have on your professional life!