

Happy Holidays



December 2009 Edition

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Article Submission

We'd love to have an article about your program or organization.

Please e-mail Shannon at Shannon.Ramsey@ky.gov to learn more about submitting an article for the newsletter.

Dates

Jan. 1 - New Year's Day

Jan. 18 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

Questions?

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions about any of our community service programs, such as AmeriCorps, the Governor's Volunteer Awards, the Volunteer Insurance Program, or the Volunteer Recognition Program.

The Heart Line: Taking the Pulse

Covering Volunteerism and Service Throughout the Commonwealth

Welcome to the December edition of the Heart Line newsletter, a publication by the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service (KCCVS).

As 2009 comes to a close, I am frantically searching for days, weeks and months lost. I know I am getting old, but time is just speeding past. So much good has been accomplished this year by Kentucky AmeriCorps members and by Kentucky volunteers. We are so fortunate to have a citizenry that understands compassion and care. According the Kentucky Long Range Policy Institute, when people were asked if a person needed help and there were no relatives or kin available, "did they know someone who would (volunteer to) help;" more than 92 percent of Kentuckians said yes! How wonderful is that!

I am so proud to be a transplanted Kentuckian whose roots are pushing through this bluegrass soil and hanging tightly to the limestone. This is a big holiday season and from me you will hear Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. To my friends of other religions and cultures, I wish you a Happy Kwanzaa or a Happy Chanukah (although almost over). Together we can make our little corner of the world safer, happier and healthier.

Sincerely,

Eileen Cackowski

KCCVS Executive Director

Governor's Volunteer Awards Update

It's once again time to consider our community volunteers and how we can recognize them.

The nomination forms for the 2009 Governor's Awards for Outstanding Volunteer Service will be available by the end of January 2010. The Governor's Volunteer Awards program celebrates the extraordinary volunteer efforts of Kentuckians all across the commonwealth. The 2009 nomination form and information will be posted on the KCCVS Web site, www.volunteerKY.ky.gov and will be sent to our e-mail distribution list. A small quantity of hard copies can be printed if requested.

You can sign up for our distribution list by sending your name, organization (if applicable) and e-mail address to kccvs@ky.gov. Contact Shannon Ramsey at (800) 239-7404 if you have any questions.

Give a Day. Get a Disney Day.

In 2010, Disney is celebrating the spirit of giving by inspiring one million people to volunteer a day of service to participating organizations. To celebrate volunteers, Disney will give you one-day admission to a Walt Disney World® or Disneyland® theme park free. To learn more or to sign up, visit www.GiveADayGetADisneyDay.com.

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"Blessed is the season
which engages the
whole world in a
conspiracy of love."

- Hamilton Wright Mabie

2010 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

Central Kentucky Association of Volunteer Administrators Planning for King Day of Service 2010

By Melissa Newton, KCCVS Training Officer

During the 1950s and '60s, civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. recognized the power of service to strengthen communities and achieve common goals.

Initiated by Congress in 1994, King Day of Service builds on that legacy by transforming the federal holiday honoring Dr. King into a national day of community service grounded in his teachings of nonviolence and social justice. The aim is to make the holiday a day "on," where people of all ages and backgrounds come together to improve lives, bridge social barriers and move our nation closer to the "Beloved Community" that Dr. King envisioned.

A record number of Americans honored Dr. King and answered President-elect Obama's call to service by volunteering on the Jan. 19, 2009, King Day of Service. More than 13,000 service projects took place across the country, more than double the amount in 2008. Americans made it "a day on, not a day off" by delivering meals, refurbishing schools, reading to children, signing up mentors, and much, much more.

In the central Kentucky region we saw a sharp increase in participation as well. There were 23 projects, nearly doubling the number from the 2008 event. And with over 540 friends and neighbors out helping others there was double the number of volunteers making a difference on the King Day of Service.

Some additional outcomes of the day included:

- 111 letters of support written to members of the armed services
- 75 "Dream" bags decorated for children
- 554 snacks packaged for the Hope Mobile
- 600 emergency preparedness kits created and distributed to the seniors living in the congregate facilities in downtown Lexington
- 165 seniors trained by Red Cross volunteers on emergency preparedness

There was also an increase in the support from the business community. Meijer and Target both provided donations of gift cards and Ale 8 One and Pepsi helped by providing drinks for the evening celebration. St. Joseph Hospital purchased the first aid kits for the emergency preparedness kits. And one lucky volunteer went home with a gift basket provided by Buffalo Trace Distillery.

The Central Kentucky Association of Volunteer Administrators is in full planning mode for the 2010 King Day of Service. This year's theme, "Blood, Sweat, and Cheers," spotlights our signature project while continuing to promote the community organizations opening their doors and planning service for hundreds of volunteers. The "Blood" symbolizes our hope that Kentuckians will head to their local blood donor center during the week leading up to the King Day of Service and give blood. We also hope to raise awareness of Sickle Cell Anemia and the need for African Americans to donate blood. The "Sweat" will be realized when volunteers head out on Jan. 18, 2010, to give of their time and talents to help make their communities better. And we will be "Cheering" all the volunteers and the great things that were accomplished during the day at the evening celebration that will take place at the Government Center Ballroom on Main Street in Lexington.

For additional information about the 2010 King Day of Service or the Central Kentucky Association of Volunteer Administrators, please contact Melissa Newton at (800) 239-7404 or MelissaC.Newton@ky.gov.

Disabilities Corner: Rudolph Parable

By Lanny Taulbee, KCCVS Disabilities Coordinator

One of the ways we encourage disability inclusion is incorporating the idea of acceptance into everyday life. As a child growing up with a severe disability, I was very aware of my differences and was mostly an observer on the sidelines of social activities. Every Christmas season, I watched "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer©" on TV and thought about the way he was shunned by the other reindeer because of his "disability" but became a hero because of that very disability. I hoped someday my disability would become a valuable asset, just like Rudolph's nose.

From Rudolph and his red nose to would-be dentist elf, Hermey and Bumble, the abominable snow monster, the animated Christmas classic is chock-full of misfits, just like me. That one-hour TV program, taught me that every disability has an ability associated with it. Sometimes it just takes time to discover that ability and how it can benefit those around us.

To me, the saddest part of the program is the Island of Misfit Toys. Even as a child, I could relate to their unfortunate circumstances, being different and feeling unwanted and banished to an island no one ever visited. But, the misfit toys finally were rescued by Rudolph and Santa and given to children who appreciated them just the way they were. I always believed that someday I would find a way to turn my disability into an ability that would be appreciated by those around me.

Today, thanks to the disability inclusion efforts of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the National Service Inclusion Project, state commissions and others, I now have the opportunity to use my disability as a teaching tool in advocacy of the inclusion of people with disabilities in community volunteerism and national service.

During this special time of year, remember that one of our most cherished Christmas songs and stories is a celebration of how including and extending opportunities to those with disabilities can pay off in very special ways.

In closing, I want to say "thank you" for helping my childhood dreams to come true. May each of you have a safe, happy and INCLUSIVE New Year!

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer

Lyrics and music by Johnny Marks ©1949

You know Dasher and Dancer
And Prancer and Vixen,
Comet and Cupid
And Donner and Blitzen,
But do you recall
The most famous reindeer of all?
Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
Had a very shiny nose
And if you ever saw it
You would even say it glows
All of the other reindeer

Used to laugh and call him names
They never let poor Rudolph
Join in any reindeer games
Then one foggy Christmas Eve
Santa came to say
"Rudolph, with your nose so bright,
Won't you guide my sleigh tonight?"
Then all the reindeer loved him
As they shouted out with glee:
Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer,
You'll go down in history!
