

Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service

Jan. 21, 2008

The Central Kentucky Association of Volunteer Administrators formed its King Day of Service Committee in September of 2007 and charged it with creating a Day On, Not a Day Off observance. The King Day of Service promotes Dr. King's vision of building broad and diverse coalitions, breaking down barriers and making our communities the best they can be. Throughout the nation, hundreds of thousands of Americans mark the annual event through volunteerism to make their communities – and the world – better places.

The King Day of Service Committee called on the Lexington community to volunteer to meet unmet local needs and to establish and nurture a lasting ethic of service. The committee worked on varied activities, including service project development, volunteer recruitment, business/for-profit recruitment, media relations and youth and senior involvement.



King Day of Service projects may meet a tangible need, such as fixing up a school or senior center, or meet a need of the spirit, such as building a sense of community or mutual responsibility, all of which are designed to strengthen communities, empower individuals and bridge barriers.

These ideas of unity and purpose, and the great things that can happen when we work together toward a common goal, are just some of the many reasons we honor Dr. King through service on his special holiday.

Outcomes of the committee's work include:

Print, radio and television coverage of King Day of Service activities, increasing awareness of the importance of volunteering in our community

Registered 12 separate King holiday service projects, using Volunteer Solutions to recruit more than 120 volunteers who worked on projects including cleaning at the Hope Center, oral history at Christ Church Apartments, a PB&J drive for the Transylvania PB&J Club, helping at the Carnegie Center open house and a mural project with citizensCREATE!

Volunteers logged 267 volunteer hours on the King Day of Service

Using the Points of Light volunteer value calculator, volunteers contributed nearly \$5,000 worth of service to organizations and individuals around the Bluegrass region

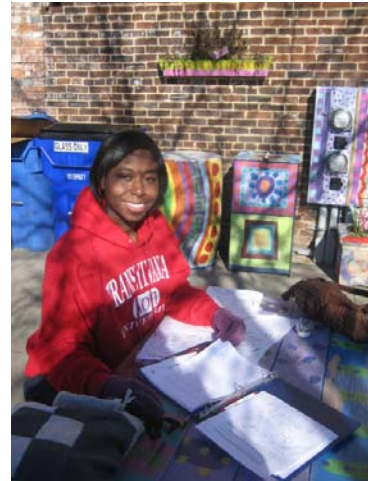


One particular project stands out as a model for community collaboration. The Home At Last Animal Sanctuary in Salvisa was in need of additional housing for abused, neglected and abandoned animals. They needed \$250 to cover the cost of delivering donated lumber and some able-bodied volunteers to do the building. Through connections with the King Day of Service Committee, the money was raised through the Transylvania University Development Office and the entire Transylvania baseball team volunteered to get the job done.

Sanctuary manager Margie Gill said, "Many, many thanks from the animals and people of Home at Last animal sanctuary to Transylvania University and its baseball team and staff! We had a productive day of volunteerism at the sanctuary nearing completion on two major projects and completing the third. The team and staff were gracious and hard working and, as a result, we will soon have a stall completed in the barn for new, sick or injured animals and a new spacious dog den for some of our longer time residents. Wonderful."

All members of the King Day of Service Committee are deeply committed to volunteerism and most have chosen volunteer management as a profession. Committee members strongly believe that our community can become a better place to live through volunteer efforts.

Karen Anderson summed up the feelings of the committee nicely when she said, "Lexington has such a great reputation for community service, it seems only natural for the Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service to be part of what we do. I really like the idea of using the King Holiday as a day on, and not a day off. It speaks to the heart of Dr. King's mission that changing a culture starts with the individual impact each of us makes. Community service gives this holiday greater meaning - these were events we would have done normally, but it has greater meaning because they were done in honor of Dr. King. What a great way to honor and remember him - by taking action on his behalf."



The 2008 King Day of Service Committee, supported by the Central Kentucky Association of Volunteer Administrators, plans to continue promoting the holiday as A Day On, Not a Day Off in Lexington and the Bluegrass region for years to come.

Submitted by Melissa Newton, King Day of Service Committee member