

Elder Abuse Prevention Efforts Honored at Rally

By Anya Armes Weber

Several individuals and programs were honored last week at a Frankfort rally to spotlight elder abuse prevention.

“Elder abuse affects us all, and if we want to ensure that our senior citizens are healthy and safe, we must give them the dignity, respect and protection they deserve,” Secretary Janie Miller said.

The rally was part of Elder Abuse Awareness Month.

Miller said many Kentuckians aren’t aware that reporting suspected abuse or neglect is the law.

“Taking that step may seem bold, but it’s important to act on behalf of these people who might not be able to speak for themselves,” Miller said. “It’s confidential, and it could save someone’s life.”

The toll-free reporting hot line is (800) 752-6200.

Miller also announced that a 15-second Kentucky-produced informational piece would run as a movie trailer on national screens beginning Friday, May 22.

“For the first time, a single, consistent message about the problem of elder abuse will be seen and heard throughout the country, and Kentucky is at the forefront.”

About 2.8 million Americans will see the informational piece, which features Louisville native and “Lost” actor William Mapother.

Also at the rally, awards were given to groups and individuals who exemplified their commitment to protecting seniors.

Sandra Halter, an adult protective services (APS) worker in Graves County, received the Outstanding APS Award.

The Pennyrite Elder Abuse Council, one of the state’s 32 Local Coordinating Councils on Elder Abuse (LCCEAs), received the annual Public Awareness Initiative Award for exemplary public outreach efforts toward the prevention of elder abuse in their nine-county Western Kentucky area.

Get more information about recognizing the signs of abuse at the [Elder Abuse Awareness Web site](#).

Jefferson Neighborhood Places Recognized with National Award

By Anya Armes Weber

The network of Neighborhood Places in Jefferson County has been named one of the top 50 programs in the 2009 Innovations in American Government Awards.

The awards are sponsored by the Harvard Kennedy School's Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation and recognize outstanding programs that improve quality of life for citizens. Six winners will be announced in September.

Neighborhood Places are "one-stop" centers that house several public health, education and human service agencies, including the Cabinet, Jefferson County Public Schools, Louisville Metro Government and Seven Counties Services. Jefferson County has eight Neighborhood Places and three satellite locations. Each Neighborhood Place is guided by a Community Council made up of customers and people who live and work in the area.

In a news release, the leader of the awards program praised the honorees.

"In this climate of economic uncertainty, these Top 50 innovative government programs demonstrate that creativity and innovation can still survive and flourish," said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in American Government Program at Harvard. "Despite strained budgets and diminishing resources, these programs prove that government continues to find solutions to pressing societal challenges."

Department for Community Based Services Commissioner Patricia R. Wilson said she is pleased with the recognition because of what it means for DCBS clients.

"Neighborhood Places truly belong to their communities," she said. "Their blended services are customer-focused and easily accessible. We are proud that a national panel has recognized their significance to Jefferson County."

Public Health Employee Receives National Award

Long-time Department for Public Health (DPH) employee Guy F. Delius recently received the prestigious Eugene H. Holeman Award, an honor presented annually by the Association of Food and Drug Officials of the Southern States (AFDOSS). The award was presented during the association's educational conference in Franklin, Tenn.

AFDOSS is made up of public health officials from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The primary objective of this organization is to promote the enactment and enforcement of laws for the protection of public health and the prevention of fraud and deception in the production, manufacture, distribution and sale of foods, drugs, cosmetics, devices and other consumer products.

Delius, director of the division of public health protection and safety in DPH, has more than 20 years of public health experience. A graduate of Eastern Kentucky University, Delius began his career as a local health department environmentalist in Madison County. He has been employed

by DPH since the mid-1990s, serving as assistant division director and manager of the department's food safety branch prior to his current position.

"I am extremely grateful to the AFDOSS for this award," said Delius. "I'd also like to acknowledge the efforts of all the staff members comprising the division of public health protection and safety, without whom success could not be achieved. We work every day to ensure the health, safety and welfare of our fellow Kentuckians, and we take our jobs very seriously."

In addition to his work at DPH, Delius has served as past president of AFDOSS, the Kentucky Public Health Association and the Kentucky Association of Milk, Food and Environmental Sanitarians. Delius, who resides in Shelbyville with his wife, also is an active member of the Association of Food and Drug Officials.

Employee Physical Activity Spotlight: I'm a Blue Belt

Alicia Tindall is a registered nurse working in the immunization program in the Department for Public Health. She decided to share her story after reading recent Focus articles. A blue belt in Kenpo Karate, Tindall is training to compete and become an assistant instructor. Here is her story.

When did you start doing karate?

I started karate in November 2007. My daughter had started in January 2007, and I had spent the months in between watching her classes. When my daughter would practice at home, she would always want me to do the techniques with her, so I actually was already learning some of the easier ones. When the instructor advertised a new adult class, I decided to join. A few months later, my husband joined as well.

How has it helped your everyday life?

Karate emphasizes discipline, respect for self and others, hard work and perseverance. These are all values in life that are important to me, so the values of the sport already fit well with my personality. Learning the self-defense techniques and katas takes time and requires practicing the same moves over and over. For me, the repetition clears my mind. It's also a great stress reliever. When I have had a stressful day, going to karate class and working out alleviates all that stress. I find at the end of class that I am ready to go home and do the things I need to do in a good frame of mind. I don't take the stress of work or daily life home after I spend an hour working punches, kicks, katas and techniques.

Also, because my family and I do karate together, it helps us be closer. I sometimes hear people say that all the extracurricular activities their kids are involved in take away from family time. We're lucky enough to be involved in a sport together that actually gives us more family time. We can encourage each other because when one of us is learning something new, the rest of us know how hard it is and how much work is involved.

Have you set any goals in the sport?

My long-term goal is to earn my black belt. There are 10 degrees of black belt. I'll worry about that when I get a black belt, but right now, I just want to work toward that. One day the title of this article will be, "I'm a black belt."

Right now, we plan to compete in two tournaments this year. So my short-term goals are to win first place in these competitions. I competed at the Bluegrass State Games last July and won three first place medals and one second place medal. My goal is to do just as well this year at the two competitions we plan to attend. I have advanced two belts since last summer, so the competition will be harder because I will be competing against higher belts than last year. My other long-term goal is to earn an assistant instructor patch. I really enjoy helping the other kids learn the material they need to earn their next belt. It's satisfying to see a kid who is struggling to learn a new technique or kata finally get it.

What is your favorite part of the workout/training?

My favorite parts of the training are the basics: the kicks, punches, blocks and chops. Everything else done in karate is based on those basics. Our instructor uses some of our class time to go over the basics. He works the basics in such a way that it really is a short cardio workout.

Do you feel a sense of accomplishment after achieving a new level?

I definitely feel a sense of accomplishment when I earn a new belt. But I also get that sense when I learn a new kata. Katas are long forms that are a combination of techniques that flow together. Katas can be time-consuming to learn. When I finally learn one and my stances and techniques look good, it makes me feel good.

Do you reward yourself?

I don't really reward myself because, for me, learning karate, and the sense of satisfaction I get from it, is reward enough. I also want my daughter to realize that, while occasional rewards are good, the sense of satisfaction and pride in oneself is a great reward. I want her to realize that hard work often comes with its own rewards.

Do you have any advice for others?

Find a physical activity you enjoy and stick with it. If you like a certain team sport, join an intramural team. If you prefer taking walks after work with friends as your activity, do that. Schedule that time in the same way you would schedule an important meeting. If you don't know what physical activity you would enjoy, just try something. You never know what you will like. I never thought I would enjoy karate as much as I do.

Living Well: Weight or Health?

Do you strive for the ideal weight or physical health? Scan the magazine headlines and this is what you'll find:

- Fight fat in minutes
- 10 easy steps to a better beach body
- Lose 5 pounds in one week
- Great abs in minutes

For those of you who are drawn to scanning the headlines for the discovery of the “quick fix” to a better body, then appearance or an ideal weight may appeal to you. This raises the issue of disconnect between body image and true physical condition. The things we can measure and see are overriding what is really going on inside our bodies. If you refer back to those magazine cover headlines, also on those covers are images of models with perfect shapes, which lead to even more insecurity for the average woman.

Here are the facts and attitudes of American women:

- Approximately 60 percent of American women are overweight or obese.
- Half don't like their weight (26 percent fell within normal ranges of the body mass index or BMI measuring height and weight on a chart).
- Only one-third were unhappy with their physical condition (with sedentary lifestyles leading the risk factors for type 2 diabetes, heart disease and other health ailments).
- Women logged a median of 80 minutes of exercise a week (meaning half of these women do even less). The average adult is supposed to get 2.5 hours of exercise a week to maintain good health.
- Only 8 percent ate the minimum recommended servings of fruits and vegetables, with more than 28 percent admitting they get the daily recommended servings once a week or less.
- A quarter of the women polled said they would consider plastic surgery, with a tummy tuck being the No. 1 procedure considered.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again. There is no “quick fix” to reaching an ideal weight or increasing our physical health. Professionals point out that people can't see the damage done to the insides by engaging in different fads to achieve the appearance of acceptance. Physical fitness takes planning, time and commitment. Stop comparing yourself to “perfect” images; don't purchase anything in a tube or bottle that claims to slim you down; and think about what's going on inside your body instead of outside. Once you take care of the inside, you will radiate a new-found sense of health and self-confidence.

Fiscal War: Landscaping

One of the great joys of spring is watching the Earth come back to life. It's always such a relief to see green trees and hillsides. Plus, we're especially blessed to live in Kentucky where all those beautiful pin oaks, maples, dogwoods and redbuds abound. Of course, all this beauty can be observed for free by taking your choice of a country drive (sans what you're paying for gas, of course). Sadly, the same can't be said for what it takes to bring your lawn back from the dead.

Gardening and lawn care can be one of life's great joys. My grandfather, for one, was famous for his well-manicured lawn. Next to his grandchildren, it was one of his greatest sources of pride and one of the few areas where he often splurged. He considered the status of one's lawn to be a reflection of a person's character.

Now, I try to live by most of my grandfather's life lessons. Still, this is one area I think he was wrong, as there are plenty of fine characters walking all over the planet while their lawns rest in terrible condition. I'm pretty sure it's not so much a dearth of integrity but good ole fiscal war constraints that are to blame. After all, some lawn care and a wee bit of landscaping can bust a bank account quicker than you can say Miracle Grow.

Luckily, there are some great ways to have your lawn looking amazing on a shoestring budget. For one, start early and stay on top of mowing/weeding. This will prevent a major catastrophe – and added expense. If you like to plant, use perennials instead of annuals to prevent purchasing items again and again. It's also a good idea to hold off on purchasing flowers, trees and plants until later in the season when stores and nurseries start to make items down. For tree lovers (especially those of you with an acre or two to decorate), the Division of Forestry has excellent programs to help manage forested property and will supply seedlings (at a minimal cost) and planting equipment to beautify your land. Also keep in mind that mulch can be bought in bulk for a much cheaper rate than purchasing it prepackaged. This is a great (if not ever-so-slightly messier) way to save a little cash and make your home look beautiful.

And remember: Even if you do go over what you'd set as your landscaping budget, you make up it up in the sense of satisfaction you'll get from your beautiful lawn. Sometimes, as my grandfather would likely have told you, a little splurge is worth it.

Fiscal War Money Saving : Want to add a special touch to your landscaping, but are low on cash? Plenty of items – from old tree branches and logs to large rocks – can add a decorative touch to your lawn. Spend the day surveying your property and see what you come up with. Yard sales and thrift shops can be great resources too.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

If you're finding it difficult to get along with certain people at work, one technique to tolerating them is trying to better understand them, suggests communications consultant Judy Ringer.

When you take steps to understand someone, you are taking initiative. That not only helps you learn something about the person, but it also gives you some command over the relationship. You are setting a good example.

Ringer suggests considering these questions.

Who is this person away from work? Seeing the other roles of a person – mother, father, grandparent, pet lover, NASCAR fan -- can make them seem more likeable, and maybe more like you.

What do they really want? Try to uncover the positive motivation of this person's behavior. Are they looking for respect, attention or acknowledgment? You could realize that you have similar goals.

What's behind their behavior? Realize that any disrespectful behavior probably doesn't have anything to do with you. Many people can get out of the habit of acting this way unless they have a mentor to guide them in another direction.

It's harder to have disdain for someone you know, even if they demonstrate difficult behaviors. In the end, your initiative will give you insight or even more; you may have a new office ally and an improved working environment.