KENTUCKY
CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
CHFS FOCUS
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## Boni Frederick Honored with Service Medal

*By Anya Armes Weber*

Last week at a ceremony in Owensboro, Governor Ernie Fletcher paid tribute to Boni Frederick, a Western Kentucky social services aide who died earlier this year in the line of duty.

**Governor Fletcher presented a plaque in honor of Boni Frederick to Frederick's daughter, Sandy Travis.**

Frederick was supervising a state foster child's court-ordered visit with his mother when she was beaten to death on Oct. 16. She was 67.

"The countless condolences received from people across the country by the Frederick family are a testament to the selfless spirit with which Boni lived her life," Governor Fletcher said. "Grief and tragedy are temporary. Yet, goodness, love and generosity are eternal. The amazing love that Boni shared is what we must remember and keep in our hearts."

Governor Fletcher presented a medal honoring Frederick's life and work to her daughter, Sandy Travis, of Dixon. Secretary Mark D. Birdwhistell and CHFS Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) Commissioner Tom Emberton Jr. also participated in the presentation.

The medal is an exceptional service award and CHFS leadership has given only two other similar medals since 2003.

Emberton said Frederick was passionate about her work and about protecting the children in her care.

"Boni was truly one of Kentucky's quiet heroes," Emberton said. "With this medal, we can recognize the silent strength with which she protected Kentucky's most vulnerable children."

Birdwhistell and Emberton also delivered cellular phones to several DCBS staff in the Henderson and Union county offices. The phones are part of a larger electronic "tool kit" to help child and protective services staff better protect themselves and serve clients.

Staff will also receive a digital camera with docking station and a small laptop computer.

Emberton launched a safety initiative in January to enhance safety in DCBS offices and in clients' homes. Since Frederick's death, he has formed a work group to identify several areas for improvement. Efforts include enhanced staff training, facility assessments by security experts and the appointment of a DCBS safety officer and safety officers in each of the department's nine regions.

## Mural by Local Artist Encourages Wellness

Frankfort artist Don Marshall painted the mural, with help from area high school students, in the basement of the CHR building. The mural depicts physical activity.

Cabinet staff at the CHR Building in Frankfort are raving about the recently completed mural in the basement hallway. Once a dreary area of the building, the hallway is significantly brighter since the mural was added.

This area of the building houses several offices and the long, wide hallway is a popular place to walk, especially on rainy and very hot or cold days.

The CHFS Employee Wellness and Health Promotion Committee received a Preventive Health Block Grant to install the mural. Jim Terry, with the Records Section of the Department for Community Based Services, was instrumental in developing the design concept. Terry, who previously taught art in the Franklin County public schools, drafted the original design, which was approved by senior management.

Terry and committee leader Gayle Yocum then approached a local graphic artist to discuss plans to transform the sketch into a finished mural.

Don Marshall, owner of Design Signs, was enthusiastic about the project, especially the mural's purpose to promote physical activity by making the basement walking area more aesthetically inviting.

The mural consists of images of people engaged in various outdoor physical activities. A springtime motif was chosen as a way to incorporate as much color in the mural as possible.

Rodgers' Décor and More in Versailles, and the Home Decorating Center, Inc. of Frankfort donated paint for the mural. Lyons Lumber Co., of Frankfort, provided the material safety data for the products used in the mural.

The mural is designed to be expanded as ideas and funding are available. Committee members would like to add to the mural in the future using seasonal themes. Inviting area art students to contribute to the mural is among the ideas the committee is considering.

### About the Artist

Don Marshall is the father of sons Matt, 27, Adam, 24, and Taylor, 20. In addition to his sign business, Marshall also remodels houses.

He said he always enjoyed drawing and painting and helped pay for his education painting cars and signs in college. His first commissioned custom work was a window logo for a Frankfort business. Later he worked in design and sales for a label company.

Marshall received specialized art training at Murray State University and earned a bachelor's degree in design from Eastern Kentucky University. Shortly after graduating, in 1978, he opened Design Signs in a former car wash building. He has remained in that location ever since.
His works can be seen all over Frankfort, including the Kentucky State University smokestack and inside the Frankfort Christian Academy.

Shortly after opening his business, Marshall suffered a cerebral hemorrhage, which had a dramatic impact on this life. He spent three months in a residential rehabilitation facility learning to communicate and perform many functions and activities.

His stroke most affected the right side of his body, especially his right hand. The right-handed artist had a decision to make.

"I prayed and thought on what to do, whether to just receive disability checks or go on working," he said. "I chose to keep working left-handed."

Marshall said rehabilitation was challenging, but he enjoyed the art therapy that helped him regain coordination and adapt to being a leftie.

**The Process**

The mural project, Marshall's first job of this kind, came with its own challenges. He repainted the road three times to get it just right.

"Many times I would start painting at 6:30 or 7 p.m. and finish around 2 a.m.," he said.

He was assisted by two other artists, including a Frankfort High School student.

"She painted about 300,000 blades of grass, the cat and the dog," Marshall said. Another painter helped with some of the lettering.

The mural was completed in about four weeks. Marshall said his biggest challenge was making objects appear three-dimensional on the flat surface.

Marshall worked on the mural primarily in the evenings so not many CHFS employees had the chance to see the artist in action. But, a building security guard did regularly check on his progress.

"(The security guard) would say he would like to live in that country house"
pictured in the mural. As word got around about Marshall and the mural, more evening staff dropped by for visits as he worked.

Marshall said technology played a role in producing the mural. Computer imagery helped him recreate the state wellness logo in mural proportions and plot other aspects of the mural before committing them to paint.

Marshall said he spent two days perfecting the rock wall, one of his favorite elements in the mural.

Yocum said the mural fully met the committee's expectations.

"Don has made a lot of people happy by brightening up the drab walls and encouraging them to walk," she said.

**DDS Wraps Up Successful Year**

In Kentucky, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services Department for Disability Determination Services (DDS) plays a vital role in helping disabled people move on with their lives.

More than 200,600 Kentuckians receive Social Security Disability benefits.

More than 164,500 receive disability under the Supplemental Security Income program.

Recipients in Kentucky receive more than $214 million in benefits payments each month.

**Secretary Birdwhistell lauded the accomplishments of DDS staff.**

CHFS Secretary Mark D. Birdwhistell received a letter on Oct. 23 from Paul Barnes, fourth region commissioner for the federal Social Security Administration, praising DDS' work.

"DDS had an outstanding fiscal year in 2006 providing outstanding service while undergoing some major changes internally," Birdwhistell said.

Among DDS' accomplishments last fiscal year was the enormous task of converting to a fully electronic disability claims system. The SSA approved and certified the conversion in June.

In fiscal year 2006, DDS processed more than 92,200 cases for the state of Tennessee and completed 900 mental medical ratings for its counterparts in North Carolina and Mississippi.

Kentucky's disability determination processing time was more than six days faster than the region average and seven days faster than the national average.

Performance exceeding the average, however, isn't anything new to Kentucky DDS, which consistently ranks among the best in the region and the nation for rapid processing and very low error rates.

The office also underwent a complete reconfiguration of work space recently to locate staff performing the same and complementary functions closer to one another, and physically reorganized entire functions to better enhance overall performance.

"Those internal improvements have made jobs a little easier and less stressful, but most DDS staff say the best outcome from these changes is being able to better serve Kentuckians awaiting decisions on their disability applications," Birdwhistell said.

DDS also continued a well-established tradition this year by naming its 2006 PRIDE Award winners. PRIDE Awards honor DDS staff for outstanding personal job performance and significant contributions to overall department performance.

Birdwhistell said DDS Commissioner Stephen Jones' leadership is a key ingredient in DDS' success over the years.

"Stephen has dedicated a significant part of his career to ensuring DDS is, and remains, one of the best state DDS operations," Birdwhistell said. "He consistently asks for and gets more from his staff. He is an outstanding champion and advocate for DDS workers."

Congratulations to DDS on another year of inspired, impressive achievements.

**OIG Investigator's Determination Pays Off**

Many of you may have read about the 22-count Franklin County Grand Jury indictment for Medicaid fraud against Dr. Michael Vories and his pain management clinic. But what you might not know is that one of your co-workers actually investigated this case.

Katie Adkisson, an investigator in the Office of Inspector General's Special Investigations Division, not only started the ball rolling, but also managed to tenaciously hang onto it and run with it when prosecuting officials thought there was no case.

"Katie took the time and effort to fully explore the allegations and develop the case," said Inspector General Robert J. Benvenuti III. "In doing so, she has demonstrated OIG's mission and values."

Adkisson, who holds a degree in criminal justice with a concentration in psychology from the University of Louisville, began working for OIG in September 2005. Prior to working for OIG, she was a caseworker with the Department for Community Based Services' Family Support Division in Jefferson County.

By October 2005, she was working on two separate cases related to Vories, one of which had been sent back to OIG as unsubstantiated by the Attorney General's Office, where it had been since 2002.

With dogged determination, Adkisson worked the case until June 2006 when there was sufficient information to once again send the case to the AG's Office. This time, the 22-count indictment resulted.

Steve Brodt, director of the Special Investigations Division, is pleased with Adkisson's work.

"Since Katie Adkisson began her OIG employment, she has proven herself to be a very capable investigator. She was selected from multiple applicants and I have no doubt that we made the correct choice by hiring her," said Brodt. "I am confident that she will bring many more cases to a successful conclusion."

The indictment alleges that Vories and his Hazard-based clinic, Simon & True Medical Consultants, now doing business as Kentucky Palliative Care, committed fraud by submitting false or fraudulent claims to the Kentucky Medical Assistance Program. The Office of Attorney General sought the indictment based on information Adkisson provided.

Adkisson, who says she's always been naturally curious, loves her job as an investigator because she thinks there is "an explanation behind every story" and in fraud cases, "the most common factor is greed – whether it's a provider or a recipient."

"Medicaid is set up so that those who need help receive it, not for providers who want to become wealthy," she said. "False claims hurt the Medicaid program and deprive recipients of quality providers."

Vories and his clinic are faced with Class D felony charges that carry a punishment of up to five years in prison for each count. Vories currently lives in South Carolina and will be arraigned on these charges as soon as he is returned to the state.

In addition to the indictment, OIG has referred the case to the U.S. Attorney's Office for administrative collections and to the Medical Licensure Board for possible revocation of Vories' medical license.

Adkisson is proud of her work and that of her co-workers in Special Investigations.

"I work with a phenomenal team led by Inspector General Robert Benvenuti and Director Steve Brodt. I can really see, even within just one year, how our efforts positively impact a state-funded medical program," she said.

Adkisson has a message for providers and recipients who abuse the system.

"Greed will not be tolerated. With all the tools we have at our disposal today, it's only a matter of time before we catch you."

**Employee Recognition Tip of the Month**

**Thanks for Filling In**

*By Shannon Ramsey, KCCVS, Employee Recognition Committee*

If, like many people, you plan to take a few days off during the holidays to spend time with family and friends, have you stopped to think about the coworkers who will be staying behind? They make it possible for you to take time off the job. They are the ones who may be helping your clients, taking your messages, handling time-sensitive work, and dealing with any unexpected issues that may arise during your absence.

If you take time off work during the holidays, please remember to thank your coworkers for keeping the workplace running while you're out. Here are some suggestions for ways to do this:

- Before leaving for vacation, be sure your coworkers have all the information and resources they need to cover your duties and handle any problem that may arise in your absence. Let them know the status of ongoing projects and how to reach you if necessary. This will make things easier for both of you and for any clients who depend on continuity of service.
- If you plan to be out for more than a couple of days, show your gratitude while you're away, too. Lift your coworkers' spirits with a token of appreciation, like a fruit basket or flowers. You can even arrange for delivery before you leave. A small gesture like this sends a message that, while you may not be thinking about work, you are thinking about your coworkers and you appreciate their help making your time off possible.

When you return, show your appreciation for your co-workers' help. Thank them and let them know they made it possible for you to enjoy your time off and return to work without the hassles you'd have to handle without their help in your absence. Hand-written thank you notes are always appropriate. You can also take advantage of coworker appreciation items from your Employee Recognition Committee. The Employee Recognition Committee's CHFS Employee Spotlight (http://chfsnet.ky.gov/afa/ohrm/dpod/06emprecog.htm) allows you to download a ready-made certificate you can e-mail to those you want to recognize. Appreciation certificate recipients' names and the reason for recognition also will be posted on the ERC intranet! Also available on the ERC site are the Just-in-Time awards, a variety of quick, downloadable certificates for instant recognition.

Take time to thank your coworkers who keep state government running so others can enjoy extra time off this holiday season!

**Living Well: Operation Holiday Season**

*By Kris Hayslett*

Holiday celebrations consist of several gatherings of family, friends and coworkers. At the center of these celebrations is food. The preparation phase may be a long-time family recipe or the traditional menu of ham, turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes and, of course, pie and cookies. In most cases, food becomes the focus of the holiday season. Here are some simple tips to remember this holiday season.

- The holiday season is not a good time to diet. Instead of turning down those things you love and missing out on your favorite treats, think about weight maintenance. Dieting during the holiday season can set you up for failure when you decide to give in to those holiday specialties. Also, setting standards that may not be realistic can attribute to feelings of failure because you cannot control your food options at social functions. Instead, pay close attention to your portion sizes and maintain some type of physical activity.

- Do not plan to start a strict diet on Jan. 1, 2007. The anticipation of having to restrict yourself may cause you to binge eat because you know your new diet will not permit certain types of foods. Diets that restrict you from certain types of food do not lead to success. The better option is to eat a variety of foods with lots of fruits and vegetables, control portion sizes of those items high in fat or calories, and avoid all trans fats.
- Eat a light snack and get in some type of physical activity before attending a holiday event. The idea is similar to going to the grocery store hungry because you end up buying things that are often unhealthy or you don't need. Eating a light snack will keep you from overeating and help you to resist the temptation of those foods that are high in fat or calories.
- Avoid recreational eating. Holiday parties usually have a mass quantity of food spread out on a buffet table where people can help themselves. Avoid grazing. Look over the options and make one plate of those things that really look good to you and then position yourself away from the serving table. Eat slowly. Appreciate the taste of each item and it will allow your stomach to send a signal that you are full before you have that uncomfortable feeling from eating too much. If you are not sure you can do that, bring some gum or mints or drink a glass of water to fill up your stomach and keep your mouth and hands busy.
- Alcohol is another popular item at parties. Holiday drinks are often associated with celebrations. Choose your drinks wisely because some drinks are packed with empty calories (calories that provide no nutritional benefits). Liquors, sweet wines and mixed drinks contain 150 to 450 calories per serving. The best choice would be water, 100 percent juice or diet soda to limit your caloric intake. If you would like an alcoholic beverage, stick to light wines or beers and limit your consumption to one to two servings. Eggnog is high in calories and fat with or without the alcohol. Would you rather drink the extra calories or eat them?
- Stay physically active everyday. This season may make you put exercise off until the holidays are over and you have more time. However, maintaining physical activity will give you more energy, relieve stress and help you burn off excess calories consumed during the holiday season.
- Do some mental planning before your next holiday function. Pre-planning where you will be, who will be there, what types of foods will be available, what foods you look forward to eating, recognizing your personal habits and creating a plan on how to deal with these issues before going to the event will give you confidence in regards to dealing with food in social situations.

Be realistic with yourself. Eating too much one day will not make you gain weight, but over-eating on a regular basis will. Create a plan of action and follow these simple behavior changes for this holiday season to be free of feelings of guilt associated with over-eating.

**CHFS Focus Health Tip of the Week**

**Safe Toys and Gifts Month: Wrap the Holiday Gift Season with Safety**

*Submitted By Anne Parr, R.N.*

Millions of toys are out there, and hundreds of new ones hit the store shelves each year. Making the right toy selection for a child can be easy when parents are armed with the right knowledge.

When selecting a toy for your child, avoid the following:

- Toys that are not age appropriate. If a toy suggests it's not suitable for a child under the age of 3, it's because the parts pose choking hazards. Toys for children younger than 3 should have parts as large as or larger than the child's fist.

- Toys with small removable parts should be avoided. The small parts that can be removed from the toy can pose a choking hazard to children. Use a small parts tester (which can be purchased at a toy or baby specialty store) to measure the size of the toy or part. If the piece fits entirely inside the tube, then it is considered a choking hazard.
- Be sure batteries are enclosed in sealed compartments so that a small child can't get to the batteries, particularly button batteries. Batteries can be a choking hazard if swallowed, and if swallowed, they can leak in a child's stomach.
- Stay away from toys with sharp points or edges. Children may unintentionally cut themselves or another person.
- Avoid toys that produce loud noises. Toy guns and high-volume portable cassette players can permanently impair a child's hearing.
- Avoid propelled toy darts and other projectiles. Propelled toys can cause cuts or serious eye injuries.
- Stay away from toys with strings, straps or cords longer than 7 inches. They could wrap around a child's neck and unintentionally cause strangulation.
- Be very careful if purchasing electrical toys, which are a potential burn hazard. Avoid toys with a heating element — such as batteries or electrical plugs — for children younger than age 8.
- Antique toys that were painted with lead paint should be avoided. Exposure to lead can result in lead poisoning, causing serious damage to a child's brain, kidneys and nervous system.
- Avoid toy cap guns. Paper roll, strip or ring caps can be ignited by the slightest friction and cause serious burns.

For a list of toys that have been recalled, visit the Web site of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Return to manufacturers the warranty and product registration forms for new toy purchases to ensure that you will be notified of any recalls.

**Employee Enrichment**

*By Anya Armes Weber*
*Employee Enrichment is a weekly feature for CHFS staff. These tips for making work better focus on team building, customer service and personal development.*
Negative conversations can be difficult to avoid when you work in a busy office. But rudeness can have a high cost; negativity can damage relationships with customers and co-workers. Ann Chadwell Humphries is president of Eticon, Etiquette Consultants for Business. She lists these negative behaviors for us to recognize and halt in our own conversations.
**Phone rudeness.** This can include not returning calls, making or taking calls during meetings and abruptly putting callers on hold. Give every customer the impression that they are important by making time for them.
**Interrupting.** Ending others' sentences is just one way we interrupt. Humphries also cites not opening a conversation by asking if the person has time to talk as another insensitive behavior.

**Bad language.** Profanity and name-calling really don't have a place at work. Even in private conversations, using this kind of language can mar your professional reputation.