

The Heart Line: Taking the Pulse

Covering Volunteerism and Service Throughout the Commonwealth

February 2011 Edition

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Article Submission

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

Please e-mail [Shannon Ramsey](#) to learn more about submitting an article for the newsletter.

Newsletter Archives

Download the print version of this newsletter and past editions on the [KCCVS Newsletter](#) page on our website.

Dates

Feb. 21 - President's Day

Feb. 24 - nomination deadline for the [Governor's Awards for Volunteerism and Service](#)

March 2 - [Read Across America Day](#)

March 8 - Mardi Gras

March 13 - Daylight Savings Time begins

March 17 - St. Patrick's Day

March 20 - Vernal Equinox

Welcome



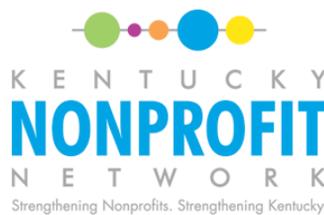
Welcome to the February edition of the Heart Line newsletter, a publication by the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service (KCCVS).

Love is in the air during the month of February, and it's no exception with the staff at the KCCVS office. Director Eileen

Cackowski loves a new resource, training and information program available free to nonprofits. Media and Publications Specialist Shannon Ramsey loves nomination time for the annual volunteerism and service awards. Training Officer Carrie Stith-Webster loves sharing wonderful things the Kentucky AmeriCorps members are doing. Last, but not least, Disabilities Coordinator Lanny Taulbee loves to help educate everyone on common struggles for people with mobility issues during the winter. Learn more about our "loves" in this edition.

Also, 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.

Principles & Practices for Nonprofit Excellence in Kentucky program



At an announcement with State Auditor Crit Luallen on Wednesday, Feb. 9, in the Capitol Rotunda, the Kentucky Nonprofit Network launched the Principles & Practices for Nonprofit Excellence in Kentucky program. The program provides tools outlining guiding principles, as well as legally required and organizationally recommended practices for all aspects of nonprofit leadership and management for individual organizations to evaluate and improve their effectiveness. Governor Steve Beshear joined Luallen in endorsing the program.

The program includes: the *Principles & Practices Guide*, *Planning & Implementation Workbook*, as well as training & education, online resources and consulting services to support organizations with the implementation of best practices.

[Read the program press release](#), [learn more](#) and [download your copy today](#).

2010 Governor's Awards for Volunteerism and Service

Deadline to submit nominations is Feb. 24, 2011



Nominations are now being accepted for the 2010 Governor's Awards for Volunteerism and Service, which honor groups and individuals who strive to improve the Commonwealth through volunteer efforts.

"We seldom celebrate the people who sacrifice so much for the benefit of others," Gov. Steve Beshear said. "These awards allow us to spotlight the compassion and selflessness of the Kentuckians who confront so many of the challenges and barriers affecting their neighbors."

To honor these individuals, the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service (KCCVS), an agency of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, is now accepting nominations for the 2010 Governor's Awards for Volunteerism and Service.

This is the 16th year for the annual volunteer awards. KCCVS hosts a special ceremony each spring to publicly honor the winners and others who have given back to their communities by volunteering.

Read the rest of the Feb. 10 [press release](#) from Gov. Steve Beshear's Communications Office.

Download the updated nomination form, information and resources on the [KCCVS website](#).

2010-11 Kentucky AmeriCorps Member Event

Showing the Love!



On Jan. 19, KCCVS hosted a member conference for 2010-11 Kentucky AmeriCorps members at the Crowne Plaza in Louisville. More than 375 members participated, and topics covered included storytelling, diversity and asset-building. Each corps did a short presentation about their program and both members and program directors participated in a reaffirmation of the AmeriCorps pledge.

More than 175 Kentucky AmeriCorps members were involved in an optional service project that took place the night before the conference. Members made almost 170 Valentine's Day cards that were sent to six different units serving in Afghanistan. Members also created Valentine's Day and Get Well cards for children and their families staying at the Ronald McDonald House in Louisville.

Kentucky AmeriCorps members have a long history of "doing for others" and are involved in programs all across the commonwealth that address the needs of children, veterans, elders and vulnerable community members. We appreciate all you do!

Videos from the member conference are on the [KCCVS YouTube channel](#) and pictures are on the [KCCVS Flickr site](#).

Currently, program sites are located in **93** Kentucky counties, although many sites serve more than one county. Check out the updated [2010-11 AmeriCorps Program Map](#).

By Lanny Taulbee, KCCVS Disabilities Coordinator

Is it Spring Yet?!?



Icy wheelchair-accessible ramp at Lanny's house (Jan. 2009).

Brrr... Sitting inside with a warm blanket, hot chocolate and a good book, it is easy to forget about the realities of the frigid tundra outside.

For those of us with mobility issues, winter weather can challenge us more than any other season of the year. Our determination to be as independent as possible sometimes becomes an obstacle in itself. We go to school, to work and to the grocery just like anyone else, with one major difference. Each time we venture out into the cold, snow and ice, we are at greater risk of falling, breaking bones and getting frostbite.

It may take longer to get to the car or van

maneuvering through an obstacle course of snow, ice, salt and cinder, all of which can stick to shoes, wheels and crutch tips. Getting to the vehicle is just half the battle. We now have to manage scraping snow and ice from the windshield before we can get on our way. Try that while sitting in a wheelchair or on a scooter. A lucky few of us may have a dependable family member or neighbor who is willing to assist with this wintertime chore. Many of us must resort to the use of the old standby, the defroster, to clear the windshield, eventually.

Tires are always an issue when it comes to winter weather, whether they are on cars, trucks, vans, wheelchairs or scooters. Wheelchair tires and rims often get packed with snow and cause our hands to freeze. Wearing gloves often weaken one's handgrip and become wet and frozen. Gloved or not, frostbite is always a danger when outside for an extended period. For wheelchair users, the ability to overcome snow-packed sidewalks and plow through snowdrifts depend largely on wheelchair tire type and the upper body strength of the individual.

Scooters and power-chairs are notorious for getting stuck on any surface rougher than the finest Mall flooring. A snow-covered sidewalk is out of the question for these mobility devices. Crutch and cane tips may break through the snow while our feet remain above the snow pack sending us face-first into the realities of winter. In my case, once I am down, I am completely dependent on the generosity of others to resurrect me before I can continue my journey.

To add insult to injury, strong winds often turn an otherwise serene winter adventure into a major obstacle course. Despite fighting with all your might against it, the wind will suddenly stop altogether or shift directions and suddenly you're at the mercy of gravity...again!

Wheels are wheels whether on a vehicle, wheelchair or scooter, and wind can redirect your attention in an instant by whipping you into a wall, handrail or a parked car. It doesn't matter if you're facing it or if it's at your back.

Once you finally reach your car, you may find yourself locked out, even with your key in hand. The wind can hold any door closed better than the most expensive deadbolt. If you do manage to get the door open, the wind may slam it shut again before you can make any move to gain entry.

If you're inside the car trying to get out, you do have one advantage. You can park in the opposite direction. However, this too has its drawbacks. You may not be able to get the door closed! Either way, sustained high winds can hold you hostage for hours.

Once we are finally in the car, truck or van we are not apt to go back indoors and wait while the vehicle warms up. We remain inside shivering until the defroster has done its work and the heater has thawed our frozen digits.

Even if all goes well with getting the vehicle scraped and we finally get inside the vehicle, we still must be ready to tackle the parking lots with the limited accessible parking spaces. Many times these designated spaces are filled with a mountain of snow from recent attempts at snow removal. Even if the parking spaces are snow free, the spaces between them are often ice packed at the very spot where you open the door causing you to take two spaces to straddle the netherworld and risk getting a parking ticket.

For all those considerate folks who have offered assistance during this extraordinary winter, thank you! Every little act of kindness from carrying groceries to the car to shoveling snow from my sidewalk reduces my risk of having a major medical event take place. I do not need to prove my independence during record-setting winter storms. My independent spirit drives me to be as independent as possible, but my common sense usually keeps me from recklessly risking life and limb to prove I can do it myself.

I appreciate every "Can I help you?" and "Need some help?" It makes both of us feel better. You feel good because you were able to help someone and I feel good because someone cared enough to ask if I needed help. That's a win-win situation to me.

Remember, inclusion is an attitude, so keep it positive!



"It is only the giving of oneself to others that we truly live."

-- Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, American educator and founder of AARP (1884-1967)

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