



TRAILBLAZER July 2005

Communities Helping Communities for a Better Tomorrow

KCCA VOLUNTEERS and STAFF ATTEND 2005 STATE CONFERENCE ON VOLUNTEERISM

KCCA OSM (Office of Surface Mining) VISTA, Tanna Huffman, Kelli Williams, OSM Intern and supervisors, Ruth Ann Starks and Linda McClure were privileged to attend the statewide Conference on Leadership. The conference was held in Charleston this year at the Marriott with OSM/VISTA'S from all over the country, and Their West Virginia supervisors were in attendance for required training workshops. The theme of this year's conference was "Showcasing West Virginia Treasurers", the best one being, it's people. Time and again we have heard comments about the hospitality and friendliness of West Virginians, and it is always amazing to see the huge number of volunteers who come to these conferences. This conglomerate of volunteers range from the young OSM/VISTA and AmeriCorps faces, to those working with a number of non profit organizations such as the Foster Grand Parent; Senior Corp and RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Programs. It is surprising to see the number of volunteers of college age; but, the most amazing volunteers of all are the senior volunteers; the tremendous amount of volunteer hours they give and the unique ways in which they contribute to our state. What a treasure! We always come away energized and inspired to work a little harder to continue to make a positive difference in our communities within our watershed.

Robert Egger, founder and president of the Washington D.C. Central Kitchen was the keynote speaker and also facilitator of two workshops attended by KCCA VISTA Supervisors, Ruth Ann Starks and Linda McClure. This man, from experience spoke of more efficient ways of transforming communities by "thinking" and putting those ideas into action; sometimes by non-profits collaborating to accomplish needed change in innovative ways. He fairly overflowed with creative ideas which he put into action and literally changed people's lives.

Speaker, David Eisner, CEO; for National and Community Service was appointed by President Bush and began serving as CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service in December of 2003. Mr. Eisner is a nationally recognized leader on non profits, shared some very interesting facts about West Virginia. Finally, First Lady, Gayle Manchin, with whom we have attended previous workshops over the last few years, and who was an early participant of this conference, was conference chairperson for two years and a member of the program committee, spoke at lunch on Wednesday to tie all the conference pieces together. Mrs. Manchin is scheduled to attend a KCCA monthly meeting in the near future which we will announce for those who would like to attend.

KCCA President, Ruth Ann Starks reaction to the conference was; "It was one of the most inspiring conferences we've ever attended. It would have been good if every West Virginian could have attended and could see the work and projects being done by the non-profits and volunteers throughout West Virginia."

One of our friends of many years, former school teacher, Dewey Houck, President of the Rural Appalachian Improvement League, in Mullens, was selected West Virginia Volunteer of the Year. We feel that no one was more deserving than Dewey for all the great work he and his volunteers are doing in Wyoming County. Congratulations Dewey!

Kelly's Creek Communities Association

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Phone: 304:595-4293

President: Ruth Ann Starks
Secretary: Linda McClure

Vice President: Tom Husted
Treasurer: Barbara Brown

OSM/VISTAS VISION

Tanna Huffman

On July, 11 – 14 I spent three and a half days at the WV VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) Conference at the Charleston Marriott Hotel. The theme of the conference was showcasing WV's Treasures. We spent a little time thinking about what we consider treasures. I feel that our watershed has many treasures. First and foremost the volunteers here at KCCA are the real treasures. You have worked very hard to make this community better for all who live here. Ruth Ann Starks is not only a treasure, but a "treasure chest". She works tirelessly, much of the time behind the scenes, promoting the Kelly's Creek watershed and it's volunteers. She is a hard working leader who represents us well. Linda McClure has been another treasure to me. She has been so patient and kind, and I know that she has a great love in her heart for all of you. The place where I work is another treasure. After talking to some of the other OSM/VISTAS, and hearing about the conditions in which they work, and some of the equipment they must work with, I feel that I am very blessed. Kelli Williams, our OSM Intern has also been a treasure to me. She is a sweet girl and she has been a lot of company for me in the office. That leads me to the last treasure that I will mention and that is Barbara Brown. She does an incredible job as your treasurer. She has a job that is not very visible, but very important and she does it well. These are just a few of the treasures that I have come in contact with here at KCCA. There are too many more of them to name in this small space.

On Monday I attended two workshops on fundraising. I attended these workshops because I want to be able to contribute financially as well as productively in the time that I will be with you. On Tuesday my workshops were about grant writing. Again, it is a skill I really want to learn. It is a very complicated process, and one that cannot be learned in a one-day workshop. However, I did learn about the process, and I feel that I can be useful in helping to write a grant.

I want to end my article this month with a big **THANK YOU** to Barbara for taking my place in leading the group that attended the Senior Picnic.

- **The July meeting will be canceled because of the summer heat. The next KCCA meeting will be on Tuesday, August 16, at 6:30 PM, at the KCCA office on the corner of 1st Street and 5th Ave.**
- **Monitoring Class Friday, July 29th at 8:30 AM. There will be two hours of classroom training and about four hours on the stream. Please call to register, 595-4293. A very good opportunity for interested parties, monitors will be certified.**
- **Brownfields Advisory Committee Meeting, Friday, July 29th at 2:00 PM, at the KCCA office. Attending will be Terry Martin, RIC (Regional Intergovernmental Council), Jennifer Herrald, Kanawha County Commission, Ken Ellison, Director Waste Water Management, DEP, Andy Ceperley, National Institute of Chemical Studies, Kathy Beckett, Jackson Kelly Law Firm, KCCA committee members, and by phone: Andrew Kreider, EPA Brownfield Project Manager, Philadelphia, Pa, Dr. Allan Comp, Office of Surface Mining, Dept., of Interior, Washington, D.C. and SRA International Consultants, Virginia.**

Working Towards Clean Streams

Kelli Williams

Did you ever wonder how we know if our streams are clean enough to drink, swim, or fish? That's the job of a water monitor. By monitoring the conditions of our local streams and rivers, we can determine the safeness of our water supplies. Water monitors observe water conditions by recording things like dissolved oxygen, metals, oils, as well as water temperature. In my internship here at Kelly's Creek Community Association, it is my goal to become a certified water monitor. Lately, I have been in touch with Tim Craddock, a citizen's monitoring coordinator for the Department of Environmental Protection. We are in the process of scheduling classes so that Tanna and I may become certified. I really think that by becoming certified as a water monitor we will not only be able to make a bigger impact on the local community, but may also help me with future careers as well. I am very excited about this opportunity.