



# McDowell County FACES Newsletter

## The FACES of HOPE

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### LOVE IS IN THE AIR

Saint Valentine's Day, also known as Valentine's Day or the Feast of Saint Valentine, is observed on February 14 each year. It is celebrated in many countries around the world, although it remains a working day in most of them.

St. Valentine's Day began as a liturgical celebration of one or more early Christian saints named Valentinus. Modern romantic connotations were added several centuries later by poets. Several martyrdom stories were invented for the various Valentines that belonged to February 14, and added to later martyrologies. One story states that he was imprisoned for performing weddings for soldiers who were forbidden to marry and for ministering to Christians, who were persecuted under the Roman Empire. Another story says that, during his imprisonment, he healed the daughter of his jailer, Asterius. Another story states that before his execution he wrote her a letter signed "Your Valentine" as a farewell. Today, Saint Valentine's Day is an official feast day in the Anglican Communion, as well as in the Lutheran Church. The Eastern Orthodox Church also celebrates Saint Valentine's Day, albeit on July 6th and July 30th, the former date in honor of the Roman presbyter Saint Valentine, and the latter date in honor of Hieromartyr Valentine,

the Bishop of Interamna (modern Terni). In Brazil, the Dia de São Valentim is recognized on June 12.

The day was first associated with romantic love in the circle of Geoffrey Chaucer in the High Middle Ages, when the tradition of courtly love flourished. In 18th-century England, it evolved into an occasion in which lovers expressed their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering confectionery, and sending greeting cards (known as "valentines"). Valentine's Day symbols that are used today include the heart-shaped outline, doves, and the figure of the winged Cupid. Since the 19th century, handwritten valentines have given way to mass-produced greeting cards.

As commercialism kicks into full swing around Valentine's Day, we should ask why we allow ourselves to get so caught up on buying instead of showing love for one another. Go back to writing a special note to someone and tell them how much they mean to you. Spend time with a shut-in or take them something to eat. Help your children make their own valentine cards. Tell someone you love them. Share a cupcake with your special person. Mickey and Minnie had it down pact—no frills but simple exchange of their love and affection. We should be as smart as cartoons.



# Kathie's Corner: Choices

What is easier, learning to live with someone else's decisions or having a miserable life? When we see others make decisions that we may not understand, appreciate, or have a say in, we sometimes get our feelings hurt, hate someone, or blame everyone else because we are miserable.

Measuring and weighing the options before making decisions on how we feel about others choices is sometimes hard to do but in the long run can help make choices that we can live with easier. For example:

Is it easier to say to your child I accept your decision on who you marry and I want to be happy with you or not accept the decision and perhaps never speak with them again? Or what if your child were diagnosed with a terminal illness, would you then find their decisions less difficult to accept.

When death comes to a person's spouse and the surviving person chooses to get remarried, is it easier to say be happy or to not have them in your life because you reject them. What if they too were killed unsuspected, would you wish you had made a different decision?

When someone you love makes a wrong choice can you have forgiveness? What if that same person later committed suicide because you refused to let them have forgiveness and a second chance, would you regret your decisions?

Can we look in a mirror each morning and say I am without sin so I

can cast stones at anyone I choose. Does the person looking back agree that you are without sin or does that person remember what you choose to forget?



When you condemn someone for their decisions, have you ever committed the same mistake? Do you judge them because what they do is a little too close to what you have done, wanted to do, or started to do and turned around?

Sometimes, we simply have to choose peace for ourselves because we are the only person that we can control. We cannot force others to our way of thinking no more than others could us. We must begin to say, "But by the grace of God go I". What other people choose to do and live with is theirs and we do not have to condone or condemn, just accept it, have compassion, and find that inward peace of knowing that regardless of what happens to the other person we did everything to give them the love and compassion that every human being has a right to.

For myself, I have made some really bad decisions in my life, hurt those that I should not have hurt, made mistakes that if done today would not have been forgiven, and because of others accepting me,

forgiving me, loving me, and not judging me, I am the person I am today. I have hated someone with every ounce of my body and I was the only one miserable. When I chose to forgive them, I was the one that found peace, I was the one that could finally move forward and I was the one that then had to forgive myself for such hatred, go to that person, and say "I forgive you". When you

choose to do the wrong things about other people decisions, you are the one that suffers, so why be miserable. Find happiness where you can, accept that others have the right to make decisions for themselves.

I have found that death can come so unexpected as it did with my nephew, brother, dad, and mother-in-law. I have said years ago that I will never look on at a funeral and know that I held hatred, no forgiveness, condemnation, or anger in my heart.

All we have (children, spouse, family, home, car, job, health, life) can be taken from us in a moment. When that happens, we can either say, I have had peace in my heart knowing that regardless of choices, whether good or bad in my eyes, I have loved unconditionally.

If you are fortunately to end this life with the family close to you, you are truly blessed so, let others live their lives, live yours and be happy.

## February 4: Thank a Mailman Day



February 4th is Thank a Mailman Day, your chance to say thanks to the guy, or gal, who delivers your mail.

After all, they are there six days a week. The reliable postal worker is always there doing their job, regardless of the weather. They are a hardy lot. You'll find some mail carriers on walking routes, wearing shorts in all but the coldest of winter days.

**Did you Know?** Pony Express riders were the most famous early American "mailmen". Their motto

was "Neither rain, nor snow, nor death of the night, can keep us from our duty". This motto is believed to be taken in part from a motto dating back to ancient times. Among the most popular variation is "Through rain or snow, or sleet or hail, we'll carry the mail. We will not fail".

Make it a point to catch your mail carrier enroute today. Give him or her a great big smile and a great big "TY". If you happen to visit your local post office, give them a thank you, too.

We know that we will be losing many of our post offices so as this occurs, remember those that have provided you with many services, from helping you to write a money

order out, address an envelope, or simply make your day by smiling and treating you with respect. They will be missed.

Personally, my sister, Joyce, has dedicated her working years to this profession and she goes above and beyond the responsibility to do a wonderful job. She cares for her patrons and counts them as friends.



## PRESIDENT'S DAY: FEBRUARY 18

President's Day is a day set aside to honor all of the U.S. presidents. We often think of two great presidents George Washington and Abraham Lincoln when we celebrate this holiday, as it falls by design between their birthdays. More and more of us, look at this day as a tribute to each and every person who has ever served in the office of the President of the United States of America. It is a national holiday. While Federal employees, the post office, and banks have the day off, most businesses and industry do not recognize it as a paid holiday.

Washington's Birthday is the official name designated to what many of us know as President's Day. During the month of February the birthday of two of our greatest Presidents takes place. Both George Washington who was born on Feb. 22nd and Abraham Lincoln born on Feb. 12th.

However, Washington's birthday has been publicly celebrated since he was in office, before Abraham Lincoln was even born. Much of the debate over the name of the holiday springs from the fact that state's can follow their own holidays how they see fit and many of them chose to also honor Lincoln, calling the celebration President's

Day.

It was in 1968 that the term President's Day came up for legal consideration in the Congress but was shot down, though the holiday was moved to fall between the two President's birthdays. Again in the 1980's there was a resurgence of the term with advertisers which solidified the holiday name in American culture. Today, few Americans prefer to call the holiday Washington's Birthday in lieu of President's Day.



# McDowell County

The **Parents as Teachers Project** housed at Community Crossing has openings available. The Parents as Teachers Mission: To provide all parents with research-based child development information, guidance, assistance, and family support that encourages the development of young children. Our vision is that all children will learn, grow, and develop to realize their full potential.

Statistics show that “Parents as Teachers” parents are: more involved in their children’s schooling; more confident in their parenting role; and read more to their children.

Statistics show that children of “Parents as Teachers” programs are: significantly more advanced in language, social development, problem solving and other cognitive abilities than comparison children; score higher on kindergarten readiness tests and on standardized measures of achievement in early grades.

Services provided include:

Parent educators conduct home visits to provide information about stages of development, general parenting guidance, tips on home safety, effective discipline, and constructive planned activities. Periodic monitoring and formal screening of overall development, language, hearing and vision are also offered to participating families. Parents in the program enjoy monthly group connection meetings and weekly play groups.

In addition, resource networks are

provided to help families link with other local providers of special services beyond the scope of Parents as Teachers.

If you live in McDowell County, are pregnant or have children up to and including five years of age, please call Karen at 304-436-8300 Extension 101 or toll free 1-888-473-9080 Extension 101.

We have 5 openings for pre-natal clients in Parents as Teachers. Good time to sign up.

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After several planning meetings for the 2014 **McDowell County Day at the Legislature**, the committee has decided to do something a little different this year.

We will NOT be having a day at the Legislature in 2014, we have started plans to bring our legislatures, state agency folks and others **TO MCDOWELL COUNTY!**

The committee, along with our County Commissioners, believe bringing these folks to our county will have a much more profound impact than showing them pictures and telling our story. The preliminary plans are to coincide this visit with the McDowell Expo in September or October. I have spoken with some of our local legislative body and they think it is a good idea to proceed in bringing the legislature (as many as we can) to McDowell County.

We will have many more planning meetings, so I hope we have your support for this change of direction

– bring them south instead of us going north! I will keep you informed about the meeting dates. Cathy Patton and I are working on an article to get the word out also.

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**McDowell County Schools Title I Program** would like to send you an open invitation to your staff, counselors, social workers, friends, parents and/or community members to a training with Amy McCready on Positive Parenting Solutions.

The training will be **March 11, 2014 at the Mount View Auditorium from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.** with lunch provided. She has been a guest on the Today Show, Fox with Friends, Rachel Ray and many more popular TV shows in the recent past spreading her results and findings on issues such as:

- Is Time Out a Waste of Time
- What is wrong with counting 1 – 2 – 3
- How to deal with tantrums and power struggles for all ages
- Dealing with teens and tweens

We hope that you will share this information with anyone that you know! We are really excited to bring her to the area to help our parents in raising their children. All parents and community members are welcome to attend this event!

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If you have meetings, announcements, etc. for March, please send them to me so they can get into the March Newsletter. You can email to [facesfrn@yahoo.com](mailto:facesfrn@yahoo.com).

# 2nd Healthy Happy Lifestyle Challenge



Preparing your car's emergency kit, attending a community event, exercising three times a week, proper nutrition, referring someone to a tobacco quit hotline -- all of those activities can earn McDowell County residents points toward winning the 2<sup>nd</sup> McDowell County's Healthy, Happy LifeStyle Challenge.

Organized by the McDowell HOPE Coalition, the competition will run from March 3 through April 13- or six weeks. McDowell residents have the chance to improve their lives by beginning and continuing to make lifestyle changes. Contestants reach out to friends and family, to form teams of three to five members each. Together, team members will commit to choices and activities that are healthy not only physically but emotionally, mentally, and even spiritually. The contest adds an important twist to popular weight-loss competitions, by incorporating all aspects of a healthy life, explained Donald Reed Jr, WVU Extension Agent.

"Sometimes if you just focus on one piece of your life and the

other pieces are not healthy, you're fighting a losing battle," said Reed. "If you focus on all the pieces, it all comes together."

Each healthy choice racks up points for the team. The team that tallies the most points wins the Grand Prize: \$500. Every team that completes the challenge will receive a prize. The Healthy, Happy Lifestyle Challenge also strives to build on McDowell County's strengths to grow, economically and socially.

"When we think about [personal] health, we get healthier as a community," said Shelia Muncy, HOPE Coalition Member. "Which then will also help us in economic growth, economic development."

Each team will choose a captain, who is responsible for organizing team meetings and turning in paperwork to the Challenge organizers. Organizational/Interest meetings for team captains will run on February 6<sup>th</sup> in Welch at 6:00pm (County Commission Building), February 10<sup>th</sup> in Bradshaw at 6:00pm (Bradshaw Town Hall Community Room), February 13<sup>th</sup> in Kimball at 6:30pm (Starland Heights Community Room, War to be announced). Once the competition is underway, teams will meet once a week to report back, count their points, and

simply enjoy each other's company.

Reed said he hopes that the weekly meetings will deepen bonds between team members and that these bonds will last beyond the end of the contest. He also envisions that the contest can create not only a connection between the teammates, but also between contestants and McDowell County as a whole.

Each week of the competition, contestants will also learn about key community resources such as McDowell County FACES, Big Creek People in Action, and WVU Extension. Team members can even earn points by taking advantage of community workshops, hotlines, and other services throughout the competition.

Muncy said she hopes the competition can lay the groundwork for a future of active involvement. "I hope we all have healthier lifestyles, which we then pass on to our children."

Registration forms are due February 28. Teams can register late until March 10, but registering on time allows teams more weeks to earn points toward victory. For more information about contest details, contact HOPE Chair Donald Reed at (304) 436-9006 or [Donald.Reed@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Donald.Reed@mail.wvu.edu)