



# McDowell County FACES Newsletter

## The FACES of HOPE

March, 2015

facesfrn.com

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## MCDOWELL COUNTY: A POSITIVE VIEW

Dee Ann Heptas will soon be leaving her work in McDowell to move closer to her home. I asked her to write her thoughts of her time working in McDowell County. Her response brought me to tears. After all the negative articles about our county, finally someone with a positive view.

“I’m Going to Make This Place Your Home” was a popular song by Phillip Phillips when I moved to McDowell County two and a half years ago as Church and Community Worker for the United Methodist Churches in the area. New friends guided me to connect and start learning about my new home through FACES Family Resource Network and the HOPE Coalition. I want to thank all of you for sharing your home with me and to share some of the things I’ve learned here as I prepare to return to my home in Kansas.

I’ve learned that this is a home that is loved. People here have a deep sense of place, of the power of the mountains, of the simple beauty of an icicle, of the unchanging nature of the road up the holler, and the long sweep of the story of life. To those service providers who have made this their home for a long time or who are blessed to be born here, thank you for your patience with a changing group of good hearted folks who come and go like me. How often have you told the

story of this unique, interesting place? I know you don’t get tired of your story, but you must get tired of our coming and going.

This is a place of deeply held connections, with loyalty to family and community. Where you come from and who your kin are count for something here. People work hard to carry forward traditions and responsibilities across generations.

I’ve also learned that a place is more than statistics. Everyone knows some stats about McDowell County, but here’s a couple you may not know. Welch has the most full service gas stations per person anywhere. That’s based on my unscientific hometown research. But I do know that next winter in Kansas, when it snows, no matter how much it snows, I’ll be pumping my own gas.

I can name people here who work 100% as volunteers for their communities. 100%!

I can name churches in this county with 100% community volunteers. 100%! Those are statistics to cherish. I have been asked how 100% is ever possible. It’s possible because it’s necessary to survive. And we are survivors.

People and groups here work together in surprising ways. Faith-based and secular agencies cooperate for the greater good. One exam-

ple would be a partnership, made possible through HOPE Coalition, of United Methodist Churches, WVU, and McDowell CHOICES that helped bring a Tai Chi class with an emphasis on fall prevention for rural older adults. This is a place where people have a strong sense of identity of family, community, and clan and can still work together.

In my coworkers in FACES, HOPE Coalition and all around the county, I am honored to work with people of your skills. Skills like flexibility, adaptability, and the ability to meet higher needs with fewer resources than seems possible.

About people who might need our services, I have learned that to claim a needed resource is not entitlement, it’s a survival skill. I have not walked a mile in those shoes, but thank you for letting me walk beside you for awhile.

I am so blessed that for a time I was able to make this place my home.

Thank you,

Rev. Dee Ann Heptas, United Methodist Church and Community Worker





## NONPROFIT KNOWLEDGE MATTERS

### Succession Planning for Nonprofits: Resources Available to You

A nonprofit undergoing a leadership transition is at a *very vulnerable point in its lifecycle*. All leaders leave at some point, sometimes unexpectedly, so all organizations need to prepare for this eventuality. But unfortunately, succession planning – if not “ostrich-inducing” – is the “elephant in the room” that no one wants to acknowledge. We hope that instead of avoiding this delicate issue, boards will behave responsibly by teeing up the issue of succession planning for a direct discussion. Board members who ignore succession planning do so at their nonprofit’s peril. They are ignoring serious risks to the future stability of the nonprofit, and abdicating their own fiduciary obligation to take care of the nonprofit (the legal “duty of care”).

When approaching succession planning, recognize that there are at least three distinct scenarios to address. The first involves “emergency” transitions, whether temporary (such as caused by a major illness) or any other unplanned departure. Taking a regular look at the organization’s plans for emergency leadership succession, such as annually during the CEO’s evaluation, keeps it fresh which can mitigate confusion in an emergency. The second scenario in-

volves the advance planning that most people associate with “succession planning.” The final scenario is often the most overlooked: onboarding the new leader. Too often nonprofit board members think that their job is over once a CEO vacancy is filled. In fact, onboarding is a longer process that involves providing the new CEO with added support throughout the first year.

The responsibility for a smooth transition lies not just with the board of directors. Current CEOs/executive directors who are planning to leave have a huge responsibility too. Ideally they will help prepare the organization for a smooth transition of leadership. We find [this post](#) to be inspiring, as it describes a thoughtful and transparent leadership transition at the Princeton Community Foundation. In it, Nancy Keiling, former CEO of the Princeton Area Community Foundation, describes her role as the departing CEO, and how the community foundation approached its goals of both successfully onboarding the new CEO and keeping the board engaged as the new CEO stepped into the traces.

Engaging in a thoughtful succession planning process for both staff and board leadership is a key factor for a nonprofit’s ability to adapt and thrive. In its most recent na-

tional study of board governance practices, [Leading with Intent](#), BoardSource reports that only 34 percent of nonprofits have written succession plans in place, while 50 percent believe they face a leadership transition in the next five years. BoardSource goes on to note that: “*Boards are weaker at the more adaptive work (work where the problems are more complex, the path is not proscribed, and multiple solutions are viable)*” than technical work, such as legal compliance. This is as true when dealing with board transitions as it is with transitions of the paid chief executive, as the [findings](#) underscore that recruiting/identifying the right board members is increasingly difficult. When polled, both board chairs and CEOs (22 percent and 25 percent respectively) reported that “building a stronger leadership pipeline” was among the top 3 areas needed for board improvement. For additional resources copy and past the following link into your browser.

<https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/succession-planning-nonprofits>

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# First 1000 Days

**The First 1,000 Days** documentary is now available online, along with additional clips and a discussion guide, at the [WVPBS website](#).

After watching the PBS special I found this interview with Sabrina Shrader and felt it needed shared.

**BY JESSICA LILLY**

McDowell native Sabrina Shrader is featured in the new West Virginia Public Broadcasting documentary,

***The First 1,000 Days: Investing In WV Children When It Counts.*** We first heard from Shrader when she shared her story in 2013 of how a program called Upward Bound provided resources that helped her to graduate from college after a difficult and abusive childhood. She was working as an Upward Bound Coordinator at Concord University. Things have changed since then.

"It's really changed my life," Shrader said. "Speaking out." When you say the word poverty, people usually get squeamish. But not Sabrina Shrader. The term "poverty" is often associated with a stigma, something to be ashamed of and often ... associated with laziness.

Well it's complicated and this story won't cover it all or even scratch the surface of the challenges and complexities of even Sabrina Shrader's life. It's a glimpse into a world and conversation that's normally taboo. "I think there's a good and bad in everything," Shrader said. "Yeah, I had a hard childhood but I don't want them to feel sorry for me." Shrader grew up in a home where she heard more than her parents worrying about bills. She says, sometimes arguments turned violent.

"My mom tried to protect us because she told me that when I heard my dad start fighting with her to run," Shrader said as she wiped a tear from her eye, "and we did. I have three younger siblings and so many times I would hear my dad hitting my mom and I would gather my three younger siblings and we would climb out the window and I would just run."

Shrader tells her story to give hope to folks struggling in poverty, and to raise awareness about resources that might exist to help those people. People like her parents.

"I just don't want people to hate my parents," Shrader said as tears fell down her face. "They did their best with what they had and what they had."

Today, Shrader has become an advocate for folks in McDowell and people struggling to get out of poverty. She also agreed to be in ***The First 1,000 Days: Investing In WV Children When It Counts.*** The documentary emphasizes the importance of the first three years of life, how rapidly the human brain develops during that time, and also the challenges low income parents face.

## ***Shrader's First 1,000 Days***

"Oh I'm sure they were really hard," she said. "I was born three months early. The doctors tried to get my mom to abort me. I can't imagine what my mom was going through. Here she was 16 pregnant with me and the doctors was telling her I wasn't going to be born alive and she was going to die having me."

"I was born without eyelashes finger-nails hair I had jaundice I was in an incubator for two months. And things weren't just rough at home. Shrader's childhood friend since Head Start, Heather Wingate, remembers having to defend Sabrina when she was picked on or even at-

tacked at school.

## ***Settling into an Advocacy Role***

Things have changed for Sabrina Shrader. She's no longer working as an Upward Bound Program Coordinator. During the election, she helped get folks registered to vote for the Our Vote Our Future campaign. Today, she's without a solid job but she's passionate about continuing her role as an advocate.

Shrader was pursuing a master's degree, but she says health issues over the past year have forced her to quit graduate school.

"My whole life I feel like I've been setup to fail," she said. "I have tried so many different things five or six different ways and then it still doesn't work." Shrader is now a leader of the Our Children Our Future Campaign, an organization working to "preserve families by providing the highest quality services that target behavioral health, cultural and other related needs, according to their website."

Shrader also advocates for more mental health services and spreading the word about programs that help families like Parents as Teachers, In Home Family Education, Birth to Three, Early Head Start and Head Start. These resources are effective, but not all of them exist in many of the hard-hit communities in the state like Shrader's. But Shrader is resilient and she refuses to give up on her hometown. "I love this place," she said. "I'm a Christian Appalachian and I was never taught to give up on anything. I was never taught to give up you just keep trying and hope for the best and eventually God's going to give you miracles, and guess what? God's given me all kinds of miracles." Fighting poverty is an enormous undertaking. But Shrader says giving up, just isn't an option.

# R.V.H.S. SADD Chapter News

February 4, Wednesday evening at Bradshaw Town Hall our award winning- 2014 Rookie of the Year....River View High SADD Club celebrated National SADD Shines Day, this was a day to celebrate all the ways SADD teens make a difference in our lives and for our SADD chapters to celebrate and shine together.

SADD students have been empowering their peers and creating positive change for 33 years, and on SADD Shines Day all chapters across the United States conducted a special activity centered on homemade lanterns an idea to illustrate how SADD youth show the way to make their schools and communities better places to live.

The students decided to take this opportunity to “Shine a Light” on one of Bradshaw’s very own, Chloe F. Stanton. Officer Stanton was killed in the line of duty several years ago. President of the SADD Club, Steven Matney had heard the story of Officer Stanton and how her life had ended far too soon. Steven came up with the idea of making a lantern to honor the fallen officer and to celebrate her life. “This day and age that we live, Officers are not given the credit that is their due,” said Steven. “Communities need to pull together and work with officers who put their lives at risk every day to protect us and the communities in which we live”.

“Students made lanterns out of canning jars, recycled soda bottles and other purchased items, they were very creative,” said Advisor Ginger Day.

“This is just one of many events that SADD will be involved with this month. February is also recognized for Teen Dating Violence Awareness month we hope to get presentations for students at River View High and the last week of the month we will be providing education and awareness for Eating Disorders,” said Vice President Kiersten Dority.

If you want to start a SADD Chapter in your school or community and need more information call Ginger Day at 304-436-5255.



# Meetings/Events of Interest

## Community Crossing

**Community Baby Shower**  
for Prenatal Moms  
in McDowell County

**March 13th from 11:00am-2:00pm**

Call 304-436-8300 to register

Only 15 spots available

## South Central Community Collaborative

**March 19, 2015**

**Wyoming County DHHR**

**10:00 a.m.—12:00 noon**

Addressing

Safe At Home Initiative: your  
help is needed to keep our chil-  
dren in WV.

## HOPE Coalition Chronic

**Disease Task Force**

**March 18, 2015**

**10:00**

**WVU Extension**

**Contact 304-436-9001 for  
information.**

## McDowell County FACES

**March 12, 2015**  
**12:00 noon FACES Office**  
**Board Meeting Only**

## McDowell County HOPE Coalition

**March 23, 2015**  
**10:30 a.m. FACES Office**

## HOPE Coalition

**Healthy Lifestyle Task Force**

**April 21, 2015**

**11:00 a.m.**

**County Commission Conference  
Room**

## Big Creek People in Action Community Baby Shower

**April 24, 2015**

**4:00 p.m.**

**Registration Required**

**Contact: 304-875-3418**

**Maria Frazier or Laura Hagerman**

## HOPE Coalition

**Family Task Force**

**March 16, 2015**

**4:00 p.m.**

**Community Crossing**  
**Contact: 304-436-8300 for  
more information.**

## Reconnecting McDowell

**Partner Meeting**

**Monday, March 16, 2015**

Embassy Suites, Charleston

We've made some wonderful progress over the last few months and we are anxious for all of us to come together to share all of the great accomplishments we've achieved, discuss what's on the horizon, and make new plans that build on our successes. **RSVP by March 1st to Kris Mallory at [kmallory@aftwv.org](mailto:kmallory@aftwv.org) or by calling 1-800-222-9838**