



# TRAILBLAZER May 2005

Communities Helping Communities for a Better Tomorrow

## *Volunteers of the Month*



Volunteers of the Month of May are Edith Szerokman and Jimmy June Hudnall. We would like to recognize these two ladies and applaud them for their faithful service as volunteers. For the last 20 years they have been volunteers at the Ronald McDonald House, in Kanawha City. Their lives have run parallel in many ways. These two friends each married in 1939; Edith (Martin) married Steve Szerokman on February 25, 1939 and Jimmy June (Young) married Harold Hudnall, on the April 25th of the same year. Edith originally lived in Cedar Grove, while Jimmy hailed from Swiss, in Nicholas County, but began living in Cedar Grove after her marriage to Harold. Both ladies worked at the Ward Company Store (not at the same time) and each had two sons who graduated from Cedar Grove High School. To Edith and Steve were born Steve and Mike and to Harold and Jimmy, Jim Bill and Abe. Edith has three grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Jimmy has two grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Edith attends the Cedar Grove Methodist Church, and is active in the AARP and KCCA. Jimmy is very involved at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Charleston with the AWANA

Program, and teaching the toddlers. By the way, Jimmy June will be 86 years young in June and Edith will be 89 in December.

The Ronald McDonald House which is a national organization, opened in 1984 and these two ladies began volunteering together in February 1985. Libby Harris, founder of the Charleston Ronald McDonald House, had used the facilities of another Ronald McDonald House outside of West Virginia, while her own daughter was ill. Her daughter later recovered, and Libby realized the need of such a place in Charleston, so she set about to see that need fulfilled. There are also Ronald Houses in Huntington and Morgantown.

The organization has a Board of Directors, Secretary and Treasurer, Jeanine Francis, and CEO Alana Minear, who is in charge of the Charleston facility. There are ten sleeping rooms each accommodating up to four people. There are two kitchens and a food pantry where meals can be prepared. Local churches, fraternities, sororities, Krogers and various businesses donate prepared food, while the Farm Club contributes \$1,500 annually for meats. Charlene Davis, Chairperson, coordinates the schedule of food supplies, and a donation journal is kept to make sure all those who donate are acknowledged.

In order to use the facilities guests must be put on a waiting list which is coordinated by a social worker. Parents of sick children are given room priority and may stay for a nightly fee of ten dollars; adults, twenty. Heart patients families from CAMC are allowed to stay for a nightly charge also, when rooms are available. Free phone services are provided by MCI for the guests to keep in touch with family members while loved ones are hospitalized. The Ronald McDonald House is a much needed service, and without volunteers like Edith and Jimmy June, donations from businesses and also from the community, such a place could not exist. The facility is opened from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm daily, where Edith and Jimmy fill the 12:00 AM to 3:00 PM shift each Saturday. Some of their responsibilities are checking in guests, take them to their rooms, and show them around the facility, and helping them to settle in. They must also make sure the laundry is put up, the trash is emptied and whatever else needs to be done. What an example of commitment and community service to the rest of us! Hats off to these busy ladies who still find time for helping others.

### *Kelly's Creek Communities Association Officers*

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President: Ruth Ann Starks  
Vice President: Tom Husted

Treasurer: Barbara Brown  
Secretary: Linda McClure

# VISTA'S VISION

By

Tanna Huffman

I am happy and proud to be your new Vista. I have lived and worked in this area all of my life, and I know the people and the problems that exist here. I can also see what a handful of concerned citizens have been able to accomplish in a few short years, making life better in this corner of Kanawha County. I hope as you get to know me better, and I get to know you individually, that together we can make even more of an impact on this community. I must tell you that I am terrible at remembering names. If I ask you at least fifty times what your name is, or if I call you Donald and your name is Dalton, please do not be insulted, because I do know who you are, and I am trying to work on this character flaw of mine.

As your Vista, I would like to have an impact on this community. I would like to see the energy, talent, and enthusiasm that I know is in this place harnessed together to, not only grow larger and stronger, but to see fruit from this strong tree, branch out and organize more community associations in this end of the county. This site can be a model for others to follow. I also have a strong love in my heart for older folks. As I am getting older myself, I have begun to realize the wisdom, talent, energy, and willingness of our older citizens. I would like to form a group that not only includes us, but can involve the whole community. Many older folks are stuck in a house alone, with no visitors, no automobile, and nobody who really cares what happens to them. The only companionship they have is a television or radio. We need to change that. I would like our group to go places and do things together, have speakers to come in and tell us how to better our health, and learn new hobbies. I have a dream about these things, but I cannot do it alone, I need help. If you have any ideas about how to accomplish this goal, please let me know. I am in the office everyday. I will be more than happy to hear from you.

I will try to work each day for the betterment of Kelly's Creek Communities Association. It is my desire that we will all join together as one in this effort. I look forward to getting to know each one of you in this year of my service to you. This is truly a great place to work and I can think of no where else I would rather be.

In the words of Cesar Chavez: "We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community. Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own."

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## RAIN DOESN'T DAMPEN CLEAN-UP !

Despite the predictions of "more" rain, determined KCCA volunteers gathered at the Ward Church of God parking lot for the Kelly's Creek Adopt—A—Highway Clean Up. God had mercy upon us and stopped the rain which had steadily poured down the night before, just in time for the volunteers to do the necessary work and started again just as we finished.

The clean up took place on Saturday, April 30th, which was the official date for the WV Adopt—A—Highway Clean Up and was a great success! One hundred twenty one bags of trash and twelve tires were gathered, which resulted in a cleaner more attractive highway. After the work was completed friends and neighbors gathered to enjoy a tasty lunch and fellowship with one another. When the work is done, there is always a great sense of accomplishment and pride of a job well done.

We are thankful for those individuals who care enough to take time out of their busy schedules to work side by side with one another to make a difference in the Kelly's Creek watershed. If we don't care about our communities, who will?

Our thanks is extended to Sheriff's Deputy Eric Drennen, who patrolled the highway to ensure the safety of the volunteers. Great job everyone!!