



# Backside News

JANUARY 2009

## JANUARY EVENTS:

**13TH**—PANCAKE BREAKFAST AT TRACKSIDE 9AM-11AM – Volunteers are welcome to come and enjoy!

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

**FEBRUARY 11TH** - VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) PROVIDED AT TRACKSIDE 3PM-7PM

## JANUARY CENTER HOURS\*:

**MONDAY**  
TRACKSIDE 4-7PM

**TUESDAY**  
TRACKSIDE 4-7PM

**WEDNESDAY**  
TRACKSIDE 4-7PM

**THURSDAY**  
TRACKSIDE 4-7PM

**FRIDAY**  
TRACKSIDE 4-7PM

\* THESE HOURS BEGIN JANUARY 5TH\*

## Opinions, Please!

*Written by: Melissa Johnson*

In response to suggestions made by various people to revamp the newsletter, the team has come up with a new template for our monthly newsletters. And we would like to hear your opinions and suggestions for improvement!

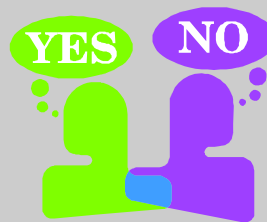
Here are some new additions to our monthly newsletter: Volunteer and Student Profiles, Team Notes, Class in the Spotlight and Volunteer Corner. We are also discussing a feature article of the month.

The Volunteer and Student Profiles section will consist of information about a selected volunteer and student such as where they are from, their favorite restaurant, what their future plans are, etc. We have not yet decided how we will choose the student or volunteer, but if you have a suggestion, let us know! The profiles will not be based on the "Student/Volunteer of the Month." The profiles will provide the opportunity for readers to learn more about our students and volunteers. Some volunteers and students only come in the afternoon and others only come at night so

they don't have the opportunity to get to know one another.

The Team Notes section will be written by one of the wonderful members of our team each month. The topic of this article could range from how much we love our volunteers to recent fundraisers and grants to what has been going on around the center.

The Class in the Spot-



**Your opinion matters! Let us know what you think about the changes in our newsletter!**

light section will highlight a different class each month. This section could be written by the volunteer instructor or we could interview the volunteer instructor and write the article. We like this idea because our readers will get to hear about what is going on in other classes.

The Volunteer Corner is a section that will include volunteer needs, information

about the Outriders Society and any other relevant information. If you would like us to add anything to the Volunteer Corner, just let us know.

The feature article section will be on the first page of the newsletter. We have been discussing ideas that would be of interest to our readers. We want the article to be informative and applicable to our Center. If you would like to write a feature article or if you have ideas for our feature article, we would love to hear from you!

Our goal is to move toward distributing the newsletter to our donors as well as our volunteers. We believe that this will enable us to connect more effectively with our donors and volunteers and keep them informed about what is going on at the Center.

We are going to start sending these newsletters out on the first of the month, if not sooner. If you have opinions or suggestions for improvement, please e-mail us (our contact information is at the bottom of the newsletter) and let us know! Thanks!

# Reflecting on 2008

Written by: Jennifer W. Hoert

It has been a year of many firsts at the Learning Center. We began this year with a groundbreaking ceremony for the new classrooms. We kept Trackside open with volunteer support until the end of July, which is the longest we've ever kept it open. Delores Huffman's art students, along with other talented backside workers, were featured in the wonderfully successful "Dream Chasers: The Art of Living on the Backside" exhibit at the Kentucky Derby Museum. Rachel Brokaw stayed on for a second year as an AmeriCorps VISTA. We went for almost 9 months without a

second VISTA except for the short stay of our first Summer Associate VISTA Diana Bautista. Then Melissa Johnson joined us as a VISTA in December.



Donovan meets his first Christmas tree.

We assisted a student with his application to attend ESL classes at Jefferson Community College.

We experienced the deportation of a student. We went on field trips to new places: Zoo, Bats game, State Fair, and Bernheim Forest. We initiated a tutoring/mentoring program that was well received by both students and volunteers. The LFPL stopped their visits due to budget constraints. We secured funds to hire an Assistant Director and Kevin Oberhausen agreed to fill the role. While it has not been an easy year, together we have accomplished many things. As for the picture, I thought it captured nicely a child's first experience of the magic of Christmas.

## JANUARY CLASS SCHEDULE:

- **ESL - M, T, W & F**  
5:30PM-7PM
- **THURS. NIGHT IS GAME NIGHT**
- **OTHER CLASSES ARE TO BE DETERMINED IN THE COMING WEEKS**

## Team Notes

### **Zen in the Art of Working on the Backside**

Written by: Kevin Oberhausen

As many of you already know, I recently became the new Assistant Director of the Backside Learning Center. I've been warmly welcomed by the Learning Center team and volunteers, developed a polite rapport with many students, and somewhat accustomed myself to the daily duties of my work schedule. My transition period overall has been a huge personal success.

That being said,

with any new job there are growing pains and there's one key area where my evolution as an employee has been slower. Only an inherent special wisdom



The enso is an emblem of Zen Buddhism.

earned through experience, meditation and reflection

can prepare you for what you will encounter when you exit the lotus flower that is the Learning Center, and venture out into the "real backside".

Barn-walking is an ability not to be underestimated. It takes a supreme knowledge of horses and a keen awareness of your surroundings. I've seen this Zen in our students and with practice I hope that I can achieve this ultimate state of backside nirvana. I will keep you updated in my journey from backside novice, to Zen master.

## CENTER WISH LIST:

- Any book for adults written in Spanish
- Bilingual books
- Audio books with accompanying texts, particularly shorter or easier books, poetry or adult-appropriate learning-to-read books
- Spanish-English dictionaries
- Soccer shoes (size 8, 8 1/2, 9, gently used is fine)
- Soccer balls
- Class supplies, especially notebooks, binders, pencils, dry erase markers
- Electric pencil sharpener
- Uno card game

### Magazine subscriptions:

Selecciones (Reader's Digest in Spanish)  
National Geographic  
National Geographic en español  
Sports Illustrated  
ESPN Deportes  
Men's Health  
Think Spanish!  
People  
People en español  
Muy Interesante

# Class in the Spotlight



Written by: *Melissa Johnson*

The class in the spotlight this month is the General Educational Development (GED) class. Judy Sharp instructs this class and Tim Heile is her only student. The class began in December and they met once a week for an hour and a half. She said that they focused mainly on English grammar. "I strongly encouraged him to read, read, read- anything and everything he could lay his hands on in order to see correct English sentences," she stated.

Judy said that Tim reviewed and studied during the week in preparation for the next class. They did lessons from the GED textbook and Tim also wrote some letters and essays for Judy to read. They looked over them during classes

and corrected them. "Tim is a very motivated student and I am very impressed with his attitude. He is determined to make a better life for himself," Judy said.



The GED classes have stopped for now but will restart again in three months when Tim returns from Turfway Park. The winter/spring meet begins at Turfway on January 1st. Judy told Tim to study the World History and American History sections, in addition to English gram-

mar, and they will continue with those lessons when he returns.

When Judy was asked how the class has impacted her, she replied, "I feel great about helping another human being achieve his goals. He gave me a Christmas card with a lovely note and I do believe his thoughts were the nicest gift I received." She also said, "I really appreciate this opportunity and am so impressed with the Learning Center and its goal to better the lives of many people."

Thank you, Judy, for all your hard work and for sharing this awesome story with the rest of us. It is very inspiring. We look forward to hearing from more of our instructors about their classes and amazing students!



## VOLUNTEER CORNER

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR  
HARD WORK AND TIME!

### VOLUNTEER NEEDS:

- Contribute to the Newsletter: If you would like to write an article for the newsletter about a class or student you teach/volunteer with-- please contact Melissa at the Learning Center. Her e-mail is [mjohnson@derbymuseum.org](mailto:mjohnson@derbymuseum.org). We would love to have your contributions!

### OUTRIDERS SOCIETY

The Outriders Society is the volunteer organization of the Kentucky Derby Museum. Since we are a Derby Museum program, all Learning Center volunteers are eligible to join, and your volunteer hours count towards Outriders benefits.

Benefits include: Museum Membership, Backside Tours, Annual Horse Farm Tour, Personalized Outriders Jacket, etc. In addition, all Outriders receive discounts in the Derby Café and the

Finish Line Gift Shop.

For more info on the Outriders Society contact Julie Henry at 637-1111, x336 or online at:

<http://www.derbymuseum.org/>