



# Backside News

MARCH 2009

## MARCH EVENTS:

**MARCH 7th**— OUT-RIDER'S SOCIETY MEETING 10AM AT KDM

**MARCH 17TH**— CHURCHILL VITA 10AM-2PM

**MARCH 17TH**— VOLUNTEER MEETING AT CHURCHILL 7PM

**MARCH 31ST**— CHURCHILL VITA 2PM-6PM

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

**APRIL 6TH**— CHURCHILL VITA 10AM-2PM

**APRIL 7TH**— EDUCATIONAL TOUR

**APRIL 21ST**— SPRING OPEN HOUSE 11AM-1PM

## MARCH CENTER HOURS:

**MONDAY**  
TRACKSIDE 4-7PM

**TUESDAY**  
TRACKSIDE 4-7PM

**WEDNESDAY**  
TRACKSIDE 4-7PM

**THURSDAY**  
TRACKSIDE 4-7PM

**FRIDAY**  
TRACKSIDE 4-7PM

## Tax Preparation Helping Horsemen

Written by: Kevin Oberhausen

Four out of the past five years, the Backside Learning Center has been providing a free IRS-sponsored *Volunteer Income Tax Assistance* program for people who earn low to average income. This service is more widely known by the acronym VITA. The VITA service has proven to be a valuable resource and successful program of the Learning Center, as every year many horsemen turn out to take advantage of this unique fiscal resource. According to the IRS website: "VITA sites are generally located at community and neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls, and other convenient locations. Most locations also offer free electronic filing." The Learning Center loosely falls under several of these distinctions and also provides the free electronic filing service.

This year the Backside Learning Center has already offered one of their VITA service dates at Trackside Louisville on February 11<sup>th</sup>, and will offer two more at Churchill Downs on March 17<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>.

Jeff Kennedy, the Director of Technology at the Kentucky Derby Museum, is a certified VITA volunteer and has coordinated this service with the Learning Center for the past 3 years. When asked how he became in-

involved with the VITA program, Jeff said, "I just liked doing taxes for fun anyways so I decided to volunteer." This attitude is indeed rare, as much of the general public views doing taxes as a burden. In any case, we are happy to have Jeff join our team during tax season to help others with this important service and to do the work he enjoys.



Kentucky Derby Museum Director of Technology & VITA volunteer Jeff Kennedy

When asked what benefits he receives from participating as a VITA volunteer Jeff replied, "I like helping folks who shouldn't have to pay to get their taxes done. Horsemen at Churchill Downs by and large have interesting circumstances when it comes to taxes because they generally have lived in multiple states, and there are sometimes residency issues. It's nice to be able to make things easier for them". The horsemen certainly must enjoy the service as well because many of the same

attendees use this valuable service every year.

For the 2004 fiscal year, the VITA program at the Backside Learning Center helped 12 people claim \$23,970 in earned income and child tax credits. For the 2006 and 2007 fiscal years, Jeff prepared taxes for 28 people and helped them claim \$25,561 in earned income and child tax credits. In total, the VITA program at the Learning Center has helped horsemen claim over \$49,000, not including this year. Every year VITA volunteers like Jeff help people save a projected \$26 million for individuals and families all across the United States.

To qualify to receive free VITA tax preparation one generally must make \$42,000 or less. It is recommended that one bring all forms when working with a VITA representative including:

- W-2s & 1099s (if available)
- Social Security Cards or Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITIN) for all family members
- Copy of 2007 tax return (if available)
- Bank Account Number & Routing Number (if preferring to direct deposit refund)
- Official Photo ID

If you would like to locate the VITA service site nearest you, please call:

**1-800-829-1040**

# Volunteer Profile

Written by: Rachel Brokaw

## Volunteer Library Assistant: Lucy Anne Kuhn

The Learning Center's WinStar Library is more than just books decorating the wall, and no one knows that better than Lucy Anne Kuhn. An interior design student at Sullivan University, Lucy Anne is our Volunteer Library Assistant. She helps manage and promote the library by cataloguing and shelving books, creating book displays, and updating the bulletin board.

Working in the WinStar Library is not the typical Learning Center volunteer opportunity. However, this behind-the-scenes work is important in the way it supports all of our other services by providing organized resources. Even though she does not always interact directly with them, Lucy Anne likes seeing the way her work impacts our clients. One of her favorite volunteer responsibilities is changing the photos on the library's bulletin board, which is used as a public photo album for the Learning Center community.

"It's one of the few things I do that gets an immediate reaction. People stop to look for themselves, or for friends, or just to see what's been going on," she said.



Lucy Anne Kuhn

Lucy Anne was drawn to volunteering after attending a high school in Evansville, IN, that required community service. "I moved to Louisville for college, and found myself spending a lot of time on 'me'-oriented activities, things like studying and clubs and hanging out with friends. . . I felt like I wasn't as balanced as I should be."

After researching volunteer opportunities in the community, she decided to work in the WinStar Library because of her love of books and her desire to be a part of Churchill Downs. "[It] is such an iconic part of Louisville."

Lucy Anne hopes that her service will help the Learning Center community be aware of the resources available so that they can make good use of them. "The literacy section is a good way for those who are trying to learn English. The books there are not really 'children's books'. . . there are a lot of classics on those shelves, things like Johnny Tremain or Call of the Wild--things that adults enjoy. And the non-fiction section is extraordinarily comprehensive for a library of its size."

## Team Notes

Written by: Jennifer Hoert

### Anticipating Homecoming

When a date is set for the opening of the backside, I know that the annual homecoming process will soon begin. It happens over several months as we travel the road to the Roses.

A wave comes in after the running of the Louisiana Derby, and we visit the barns eagerly hoping to see some familiar faces. When we do, tears of joy may be shed, formal handshakes are exchanged for welcoming hugs.



An empty barn soon to be filled on the backside of Churchill Downs

Then another wave arrives after the Florida Derby, another with the opening of Keeneland, and the last wave comes in after the Arkansas

Derby. The tears and hugs continue as each new wave arrives. The empty barns come alive and suddenly all things seem right in the world. The smell of the horses has returned and with it the dedicated team of people that support these competitive athletes.

Everyone is home and the community at the Learning Center begins to reform and reacquaint itself, tentatively at first, but then in full swing after our big homecoming game, the Kentucky Derby, the greatest two minutes in sports.

### MARCH CLASS SCHEDULE:

**ESL - MONDAY-FRIDAY**  
5:30PM-7PM

**SPANISH - TUESDAY**  
5:30PM-7PM

**CONVERSATION TABLES - THURSDAY** 5:30PM-7PM

# Class in the Spotlight



## 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
- Uno card game
- 2 Updated GED textbooks in English
- 2 Updated GED textbooks in Spanish
- 10 Pimsleur Inglés: English for Spanish Speakers with Audio CD textbooks
- Popcorn & oil packets for theater popcorn machine

Written by: Rachel Brokaw

The Learning Center's computer services have long been one of the most popular programs we offer. Our Churchill Downs computer lab has 12 computers connected to the Internet, available to clients whenever the Center is open. In 2008, the computer lab had an average 62 users each month, with a total of 161 users during the year. For many clients, this is their introduction to the Learning Center. They walk in the door looking for free Internet, and they find many more opportunities.

Our computer services also include educational programming. In 2008, we offered a bilingual computer class on Wednesday nights from April to November, with an average of 11 students each week, and a total of 46 during the year. Many of our clients have limited experience with computers, so the class began with the basics: introduction to computers, using the internet, setting up an email account, etc. By November, the class featured a workshop series on using digital cameras. Students were able to borrow the Learning Center's cameras (originally donated by the SNAP Foundation for use in the SNAP Project) to take pictures, load them onto thumb drives and

go to Walgreen's to print them. In addition, throughout the year, computer teacher Rich Stenberg held regular question and answer sessions in order to address any individual computer issues.



Rich, Dennis and Carlos in Computer Class at Churchill in 2008

At Trackside, computer services are still popular. The Trackside computer lab is smaller, with 4 internet-connected computers available for client use. While the population this winter is too low to support a regular class, volunteer Pat Vickers has helped address client interest by leading question and answer sessions every Wednesday evening. She says she gets a lot of questions from clients interested in getting their own computers: "Everyone wants to know the best and cheapest way to get a computer. It's a tough question because everyone has different needs. There are new laptops

out there, designed primarily for web use that I tell them about."

Our computer services depend on volunteer teamwork. Last spring Rich Stenberg, the bilingual instructor, began developing a computer curriculum based on clients' computer lab needs. By the end of summer, Pat Vickers joined him in developing the digital camera workshops. Generally, Pat prepares a draft of a PowerPoint presentation and activities, which Rich will revise, translate, and present in class. In the end, all of the class materials are preserved at the Learning Center for future use.

According to Pat, providing class support for the digital camera workshops has been her favorite part of volunteering at the Learning Center. She really enjoyed seeing students grow in their understanding of computers.

"Going with students to Walgreen's to pick up their pictures was a lot of fun. For one reason some of their pictures were great. Another reason was there was a moment at the store when the students saw a port on the Walgreen's kiosk and realized their USB thumb drives would fit there. They really understood then that their little thumb drives would work just about anywhere in the world," Pat said.

## VOLUNTEER CORNER

### VOLUNTEER NEEDS:

**CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER:** At the Volunteer Meeting, volunteers will have the opportunity to sign-up to write an article for the newsletter.

### VOLUNTEER MEETING:

The next volunteer meeting is **March 17th at 7pm** at the Backside Learning Center at Churchill.

### THE OUTRIDER'S 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

## THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND TIME!

Line Gift Shop.

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

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

### NEXT OUTRIDER'S SOCIETY MEETING:

The next Outrider's Society Meeting will be held March 7th at 10 a.m. at the Kentucky Derby Museum.