



# Voluntary Action Center

the heart of service in Boone County

## NEWSLETTER



800 N. Providence Rd. 573.874.2273 www.vacmo.org October-November 2009

### Voluntary Action Center Christmas Program

Tis the season for giving...



For over 25 years, Voluntary Action Center has been providing Boone County families in need with holiday cheer. Please join us in helping continue this tradition by adopting a family this year. Last year, generous sponsors in the community assisted over 1200 families with gifts and a holiday meal. Families will begin signing up on October 10. Local agencies also refer clients to VAC. Once sign up is complete, VAC will match these families and individuals with organizations, businesses, churches and other sponsors.

We know the holidays are busy, so we have made sponsoring a family easy. Contact VAC at 874-2273 after October 1 and let us know what size family you would like to sponsor. We will match you to a family and send you information about them, along with some gift ideas. You will be scheduled to drop off your gifts and food in December at our gift distribution center. The dates for drop off are December 7, 8, 14 and 15. Instead of doing a gift exchange at work or in your club, why not sponsor a needy family this year!



#### Christmas Volunteers

The VAC Christmas Program would not be possible without the support of sponsors and many dedicated volunteers. Volunteers are needed to assist with family signup and gift distribution. Shifts are available for numerous dates and times and can run as short as two hours.



Christmas sign up dates: October 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20 & 22 (8:30 a.m. to Noon) and October 14 (5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.). Volunteers will interview clients and fill out the family gift list form at the VAC office, 800 N. Providence.

Distribution dates: December 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16 & 17 (8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). Volunteers will help organize, lift and carry gifts and food. The distribution center is Trinity Presbyterian Church at 1600 W. Rollins Road.

*See page 5 for more details on the Christmas program.*

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## Agency Spotlight

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Heart of Missouri  
Court Appointed Special  
Advocates  
FOR CHILDREN

The legal system can be a confusing and scary thing, especially for a child. Heart of Missouri CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) works to ensure that is not the case. The organization's hope is to develop the resources to provide a trained community CASA volunteer to all abused and neglected children in the 13th Judicial Circuit Court, which includes Boone and Callaway counties.

CASA is a national organization that is supported by the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Programs. There are CASA offices all over the country. The Missouri CASA headquarters are located in Columbia, along with the Heart of Missouri CASA office. CASA is endorsed by the America Bar Association and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Heart of Missouri CASA formed in 2005 and assigned its first case to a CASA volunteer in 2006. Approximately 290 children are in custody of the 13th circuit court for abuse and neglect cases. Currently, Heart of Missouri CASA has about 19 advocates serving 33 children. The goal of the agency is to increase capacity so that every child in the 13th Judicial Circuit has a court appointed special advocate.

CASA volunteers advocate for the best interest of the child in abuse and neglect cases by investigating the circumstances of the case and making a recommendation to the judge based on the volunteer's independent evaluation of the case. CASAs are sworn in as officers of the court after training. CASA volunteers only work on one case at a time, and follow that case from the

initial investigation until the child is placed in a safe, permanent home. The CASA will meet with the child on a regular basis, review documents and interview everyone involved in the child's case before making a recommendation to the Court. Volunteers may also suggest services that might assist the child or family. An important element of the CASA volunteer's work is to provide positive emotional support to the children they serve.

CASA volunteers come from many different backgrounds. The most important quality of a volunteer is a commitment to fight for what is in the best interest in the child. Volunteers must be 21 or older, have a high school diploma or equivalent and pass a background screening. Volunteers should also have a passion for ensuring the happiness and safety of children. All volunteers are provided with extensive training before being assigned to a case.

Heart of Missouri CASA has other volunteer needs as well. Individuals are needed to serve on the board of directors and/or help with fundraising efforts. Businesses may also support Heart of Missouri CASA by sponsoring fundraising activities or donating gift certificates for activities the children and CASA volunteers can participate in together. In addition, any donation of \$100 or more to Heart of Missouri CASA is eligible for "Children in Crisis" 50% tax credit on Missouri state taxes. For more information on this special credit, contact Heart of Missouri CASA.

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>To learn more about Heart of Missouri CASA:<br/>Steven Stolnick, Executive Director<br/>PO Box 10028<br/>Columbia, MO 65205<br/>(573) 442-4670<br/>heartofmissouricasa@hotmail.com<br/>www.heartofmissouricasa.com</p> |
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## VAC News and Notes

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### Warm Up Columbia

The fifth annual Warm Up Columbia event will take place on Saturday, October 17 from 9 am until noon at the Armory located at 701 East Ash Street. Free coats and blankets will be distributed to low-income families, children, the elderly and the disabled in Boone County. All individuals who wish to receive a coat or blanket must be present the day of distribution and can receive one item per person. All items will be given out on a first come, first served basis. Everyone will be asked to sign in upon arrival. Call VAC at 874-2273 with any questions.

Warm Up Columbia is a joint effort between Kathy Hull and VAC. Special thanks to area churches and Commerce Bank for conducting coat drives to benefit the event.

### Congratulations

Congratulations to VAC's own Amy Myers for being named to the 2009 Hall of Leaders by the Columbia Public Schools Foundation. Amy and her husband, Rob, will be honored October 1 for being outstanding volunteers. Thank you Amy for your dedication to Columbia Public Schools



### 40th Anniversary

VAC is engaged in a fundraising campaign to celebrate its 40th anniversary of service to Boone County. Celebrate VAC and support its future by being a part of our \$40,000 for 40 years campaign. Donations can be made online or via mail. Donation forms may be downloaded on the VAC website at [www.vacmo.org](http://www.vacmo.org).

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## Get Involved!

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### Columbia Volunteer Network Conference

The Columbia Volunteer Network is made up of people who work with volunteers as all or part of their job. Membership in this organization is free. The group meets quarterly in January, April, July and October.

A special meeting of the Columbia Volunteer Network is being held on Wednesday, October 7. Join members in the Virginia Young Room of the Columbia Public Library for a presentation by Rick Skinner, director of the Volunteer Center for the United Way of Greater St. Louis. Registration will start at 10:30, with the program beginning at 11. Cost is \$12 payable to Voluntary Action Center.

If you would like to learn more about the Columbia Volunteer Network, contact Cindy Mustard at [cindymustard2@gmail.com](mailto:cindymustard2@gmail.com) or Leigh Britt at [volunteer@GoColumbiaMo.com](mailto:volunteer@GoColumbiaMo.com)

### Boone County Related Agencies Association

Boone County Related Agencies Association is a group of employees from local area agencies who meet monthly to talk about upcoming agency events. Membership is free. An agency or program is featured at each meeting. Meetings are held at the Columbia Public Library.

Join BCRAA for its next two meetings, October 13, (Boys and Girls Town of Missouri) and November 10 (First Chance for Children).

For more information on BCRAA, contact Cindy Mustard at [cindymustard2@gmail.com](mailto:cindymustard2@gmail.com)



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# Fall Events

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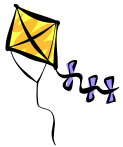
The Third Annual Moo Dah Parade will take place Saturday, October 3 at 2 p.m. in downtown Columbia. Proceeds of entries benefit the Heart of Missouri United Way. For more information visit [www.moodahparade.com](http://www.moodahparade.com).

The CROP Walk (Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty) will take place Sunday, October 4 at 2 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church located at 16 Hitt Street.



The 50th Annual Boone County Art Show is October 10 and 11 at Boone County National Bank. For more information about the show contact the Columbia Art League at (573) 443-8838 or Boone County National Bank at (573) 874-8483.

The Hartsburg Pumpkin Festival will take place October 10 and 11 from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. For more information visit [www.hartsburgpumpkinfest.com](http://www.hartsburgpumpkinfest.com).



One Sky-One World Day is Sunday, October 11. Join other kite fliers from all over Missouri at Cosmo-Bethel Park from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Youth Service Day will take place on Saturday, October 17 from 8 a.m. until Noon.

Youth will participate in several service projects including Hinkson Stream clean up, graffiti removal, Warm up Columbia and Plant the Promise. Volunteers will meet in the Courthouse Square. For more information contact Ryan Worley at (573) 443-2556 x 1284.

The Sustainable Living Fair is Saturday, October 17 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the Columbia College Student Commons. Details can be found at [www.sffcolumbia.org](http://www.sffcolumbia.org).

The final Family Fun Fest of 2009 is Wednesday, October 21 from 6 to 8 p.m. in Flat Branch Park. The theme is Percussion Phun and there will be drums galore!



Tiger Night of Fun, the safe alternative trick-or-treat event, will take place on Saturday, October 31. Kids will enjoy fun activities and treats at the Hearnes Center from 5 to 7 p.m.

Altrusa Club of Columbia is hosting a fundraising event, STAR Kids, on Tuesday, November 3 at 5:30 p.m. at the Courtyard by Marriott. Carol Weisman will speak about her book, Raising Charitable Children. Tickets are \$25.

Family Fun Night at the ARC will take place on Friday, November 6 from 7 to 9 p.m. Cost is \$3 per person. For more information contact Parks and Recreation at 874-7460.



The 20th Annual King's Daughters Holiday Festival is November 14 and 15 at the Holiday Inn Expo Center. Tickets are \$3 in advance and \$6 at the door. For more information visit [www.kdholidayfestival.com](http://www.kdholidayfestival.com).

The Fourth Annual Reentry Conference is November 18-20 at Tan-Tar-A Resort at Lake of the Ozarks. This cost for the event is \$99 and accommodations are \$60 per night. For more information visit [www.stlarchs.org](http://www.stlarchs.org).

The Fourth Annual Missouri Homelessness Awareness Event will be held on Thursday, November 19 in the first floor Rotunda of the State Capitol. Agencies can register to have a booth and/or attend workshops. Contact Joanne Ivey at (573) 634-2901 for more information.

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## VAC Christmas Program Information



### Sponsor Information

Sponsors are asked to provide food for Christmas dinner and at least one new gift for each person age 18 or younger, elderly or disabled. We suggest you plan for \$40 per person for gifts and \$10 per person for food. There are many ways to participate:

- ★ Purchase the food and gifts yourself, wrap the new gifts, and deliver them to our holiday distribution center on your assigned date in December.
- ★ Purchase gift certificates to grocery and department stores, mail or bring them to VAC, and we will give them to the family to do their own shopping.
- ★ Provide VAC with a donation and we will write vouchers for the family to shop at Target and Gerbes. The vouchers we write can list specifically what may be purchased. They also prohibit the purchase of alcohol or tobacco products.
- ★ Shop for the gifts and give VAC a donation to write a voucher for the food. Bring the gifts and donation to the distribution center. This is the most popular option.
- ★ If you cannot afford to sponsor a whole family but would like to participate, just send a donation and we will combine it with other donations to provide for a family.
- ★ Be creative! Have a food drive, collect cleaning and laundry supplies, have a mitten tree, or buy some new toys or books and bring them to our distribution center. We will give them to someone who needs them!

*If you are interested in sponsoring a family, contact VAC at 874-2273 after October 1. Information on your family will be mailed to you after November 1.*

### Client Sign Up Dates

Saturday, October 10 (full time working parents only) 9 a.m.

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Friday October 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20 & 22 9 a.m.

Wednesdays, October 14 & 21 (full time working parents only) 6 p.m.

80 numbers will be handed out each day 30 minutes before sign up. All households must have:

1. ID for all people in the home
2. Proof of all income
3. Proof of address
4. Gift ideas and clothing sizes



### Sponsor Drop Off

Deliver to: Trinity Presbyterian Church - 1600 W. Rollins Rd.

One of the following dates will be assigned to each sponsor:

December 7, 8, 14, 15

Please deliver on your assigned date or call VAC to change.



### Client Pick Up

Recipients will be notified by mail around December 1 to pick up at a specified time on either December 10 or 17.

Please pick up at your assigned time or call VAC to change.

Pickup At: Trinity Presbyterian Church - 1600 W. Rollins. Rd.

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Visit [www.vacmo.org](http://www.vacmo.org) for more information about VAC's programs, or to sign up for VAC's e-newsletter.

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# ATTENTION ALL VOLUNTEERS!!

**Voluntary Action Center:** help sort and distribute coats for Warm Up Columbia on Friday, October 16. Shifts available from 9:00 a.m. to Noon or 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Contact Cindy Mustard, 874-2273 or [cindymustard2@gmail.com](mailto:cindymustard2@gmail.com).

**Tiger Night of Fun:** individuals and groups are needed to provide games and activities for children and volunteers to help with this Tiger Halloween night on Saturday, October 31 from 5-7 p.m. Contact Office of Volunteer Service at 874-7499 or [volunteer@gocolumbiamo.com](mailto:volunteer@gocolumbiamo.com).

**Mustard Seed Fair Trade:** volunteers are needed to help in the store, run the register, assist customers, organize merchandise and educate others about Fair Trade. Shifts are usually three hours once a week. Contact Jessica Canfield at 449-6166 or [info@mustardseedfairtrade.org](mailto:info@mustardseedfairtrade.org).

**Happy Tails Animal Sanctuary:** foster dogs and cats. Training is provided, and commitment is usually for 4-8 weeks. Call Susan or Jim, 445-1680

**Columbia Regional Hospital:** help as a mail courier, gift shop retailer, registration escort, or waiting room assistant. Contact Kay Perry Wheeler, 875-9218 or [perryka@health.missouri.edu](mailto:perryka@health.missouri.edu).

**Family Counseling Center:** help with office work, yard work, minor home repairs, and curriculum development. Contact Shauna, 443-2204 or [skammerich@fccmo.org](mailto:skammerich@fccmo.org).

**Household Hazardous Waste Collection:** greet, direct traffic, and share recycling information with the public on the first and third Saturdays from April through November. E-mail Pubic Works at [pw-volunteer@GoColumbiaMo.com](mailto:pw-volunteer@GoColumbiaMo.com).

**Columbia Housing Authority:** help children with homework or recreational activities, train adults on computer skills, help with the food pantry, or assist seniors and the disabled with light housekeeping. Call 443-2556.

**Hospice Compassus:** be a caring volunteer for the hospice program. Contact Dale Willis, 443-8360 or [dale.willis@hospicecom.com](mailto:dale.willis@hospicecom.com).

**Marine Parents.Com:** volunteer on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. to unpack and sort donations for care packages to be sent to deployed marines around the world. Contact Eric Sims, 449-2003 or [eric@marineparents.com](mailto:eric@marineparents.com).

**Youzeum:** help with fundraising, events, gift shop, tours, exhibit demonstrators and more. Call 886-2006 or visit [www.youzeum.org](http://www.youzeum.org).

**Preferred Hospice:** help terminally ill patients in central Missouri. Contact Terra Eavenson, 499-4540 or [teavenson.col@preferredhospice.com](mailto:teavenson.col@preferredhospice.com).

**Rainbow House Emergency Shelter:** help with daily activities and general care of the children, office work, outreach, special yard/home projects and home and general maintenance. Training and orientation are provided. Contact Lori Stoll, [lstoll@rainbowhousecolumbia.org](mailto:lstoll@rainbowhousecolumbia.org) or 474-6600.

**Boone County Council on Aging:** rake leaves for seniors. Contact [bcca03@centurytel.net](mailto:bcca03@centurytel.net) or 443-1111.

**The Wardrobe:** help sort and hang clothing and other items. Contact Carol Smith, 442-3260.



# October 2009



| Sun                               | Mon                                                | Tue                                              | Wed                                                                            | Thurs                              | Fri                                | Sat                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                   |                                                    |                                                  |                                                                                | 1                                  | 2                                  | 3                                                                        |
| 4<br>Crop Walk                    | 5                                                  | 6                                                | 7<br>Columbia Volunteer<br>Network<br>Conference                               | 8                                  | 9                                  | 10<br>VAC Christmas Signup<br>(Working Parents Only)<br>Pumpkin Festival |
| 11<br>Cedar Creek Ride-<br>A-Thon | 12<br>Columbus Day<br>VAC Christmas<br>Signup 9 am | 13<br>VAC Christmas<br>Signup 9 am<br>BCCRA Mtg. | 14<br>VAC Christmas Signup<br>6 pm<br>(Working Parents Only)<br>VAC Board Mtg. | 15<br>VAC Christmas<br>Signup 9 am | 16<br>VAC Christmas<br>Signup 9 am | 17<br>Warm Up Columbia<br>Youth Service Day                              |
| 18                                | 19<br>VAC Christmas<br>Signup 9 am                 | 20<br>VAC Christmas<br>Signup 9 am               | 21<br>VAC Christmas<br>Signup 6 pm<br>(Working Parents Only)                   | 22<br>VAC Christmas<br>Signup 9 am | 23                                 | 24<br>MU Homecoming<br>Make a Difference<br>Day                          |
| 25                                | 26                                                 | 27                                               | 28<br>Interfaith Council<br>Basic Needs Mtg.                                   | 29                                 | 30                                 | 31<br>Halloween<br>Tiger Night of Fun @<br>Hearnes                       |



# November 2009



| Sun                                                       | Mon | Tue               | Wed                                | Thurs                              | Fri              | Sat                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1<br>Daylight Savings<br>Time Ends<br>Arts & Crafts Fest. | 2   | 3<br>Election Day | 4                                  | 5                                  | 6                | 7                                 |
| 8                                                         | 9   | 10<br>BCCRA Mtg.  | 11<br>Veterans Day<br>(VAC Closed) | 12<br>Chamber QMB                  | 13               | 14<br>King's Daughter<br>Festival |
| 15                                                        | 16  | 17                | 18<br>Basic Needs Mtg.             | 19                                 | 20               | 21                                |
| 22                                                        | 23  | 24                | 25                                 | 26<br>Thanksgiving<br>(VAC Closed) | 27<br>VAC Closed | 28                                |
| 29                                                        | 30  |                   |                                    |                                    |                  |                                   |



**Voluntary  
Action Center**

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in Boone County

**Voluntary Action Center  
800 North Providence, Suite 220  
Columbia, MO 65203**

Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Columbia, MO. 65201  
Permit No. 141

Return Service Requested

**VOLUNTARY ACTION CENTER  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**President:** John Dean  
**Vice President:** Alex George  
**Secretary:** Lynn Cole  
**Treasurer:** Bob Duncan  
**Past President:** Cathy Scroggs  
Steve Alexander  
Shawn Barnes  
Jason Becking  
Andrea Benna  
Billy Borgmeyer  
Leigh Britt  
Brian Cottle  
Kim England  
Lea Evans  
Susan Gowin  
Jackie Hawks  
Gwen Jones  
Raymond Massey  
Suzanne McDavid  
Mark Monroe  
Rick Ravenhill  
Molly Read  
Jolene Schulz  
Andrea Shelton  
Andrew Spaedy

**STAFF**

**Executive Dir.:** Cindy Mustard  
**Project Director:** Marissa Todd  
**Finance Admin.:** Nancy Duncan  
**Social Workers:** Ron Schmidt &  
Christina Montgomery  
**Admin. Assistant:** Amy Myers

**Coming up in December...**

- ★ Living Windows Festival in the District
- ★ City Kwanzaa Celebration
- ★ Santa Hotline
- ★ VAC Christmas Distribution
- ★ First Night Columbia



**Thank You!**

VAC would like to extend a special thank you to the many volunteers and donors who made the summer so successful!

- ◆ VAC served hundreds of children through the Lunch in the Park program. Thank you to the many organizations and individuals who volunteered to serve lunch during June, July and August.
- ◆ Over 1300 children received school supplies at the Back to School Fair held at Calvary Baptist Church. Thank you to the many organizations and sponsors that helped make this event successful. Thank you also to those individuals and businesses who donated school supplies.
- ◆ VAC distributed 218 fans this summer through the Fan program. Thanks to KOMU Fan Club and Lowe's for their assistance in collection of fans.

