

# Buade

Spring 2021

*The Colonel of the Derby*  
*Col. Matt Winn*



A publication of  
The Honorable Order of

**Kentucky  
Colonels**



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## From the Commanding General

# Giving is what we do.

The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels aspires to transform the extraordinary generosity of our thousands of Colonels worldwide into good works. Our Colonels expect that of us, and year after year we honor those expectations by passing that generosity along to hundreds of worthy causes within the Commonwealth.

The HOKC has a rigorous grant-vetting process through which trustees and staff visit and evaluate non-profits which have applied for funding. In this issue of *Bugle*, General Barbara Dutschke details the vetting process. While a trustee, she professionalized the process that the organization uses today. With our goal of positive change and to ensure that HOKC grantees promote inclusion and diversity, the grants committee updated the grant application to include questions regarding racial or ethnic demographics of applicants' boards, staff, and clients and their racial equity practices.

Because a Colonel Gave, over 77,000 individuals were served by God's Food Pantry of Pulaski County in 2020, and through The Challenger Center in Hazard thousands of students have experienced what it would be like to be an astronaut or mission

control specialist, with many inspired to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math. We feature these grant recipients through the words of their Executive Directors.

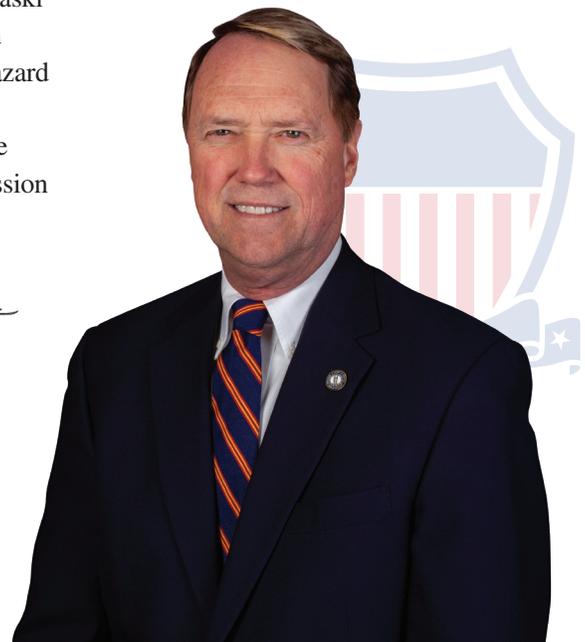
Colonel spotlights include Charles Todd, our first Kentucky Colonel; Sally Siebert, a Bronze Star recipient whose service has taken her around the globe; and Matt Winn, credited with transforming the Kentucky Derby, the most exciting two minutes in sports.

While every Governor has a unique list of qualifications for bestowing the Commonwealth's highest honor, a Kentucky Colonel has demonstrated outstanding personal achievements and commitment to serving their community, state, or nation. As members of the Honorable Order, you validate that Governor's decision as you continue to give of your time, talents, and treasures.

Thank you for your support. There is much to celebrate – Because a Colonel Gave. 🇺🇸

*Hal N. Sullivan*

Hal N. Sullivan  
Commanding General,  
Honorable Order of  
Kentucky Colonels



## Grant Process

# Face-to-face Meetings Are Crucial.

by General Barbara Dutschke, former trustee and grants committee chair

The primary mission of the Kentucky Colonels is to use your contributions to support those most in need throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky and beyond. We've given you our word. In order to achieve this mission, we award funding to non-profit organizations through grants. The grant request process begins with filling out the grant application. In recent years, we have averaged 340 grant requests per year. Grant requests can run from as few as 20 pages to well over 100 pages. At approximately 17,500 words per request, that means that approximately 5,950,500 written words must be read and analyzed. To put that in perspective, *Gone with the Wind* had 418,053 words; *Atlas Shrugged* came in at 561,996 words. In fact, the entire Harry Potter seven-book series totaled 1,084,170 words. So to say that the reading of these grant applications is a massive process is an understatement. But, we've given you our word.

All funding organizations have similar grant request forms. And all review them by reading and making decisions primarily based on the written document – words.

Our sixteen trustees and two team members who pour over all this data are passionate about making sure that each of the dollars our members donate produce maximum results and impact as many in Kentucky as possible. It's not an easy task. We're focused on making sure that each grant and non-profit organization meets our high standard

of accountability. As you might imagine, the sophistication of these grant request forms runs the gamut – from professional grant writers to an overworked agency head trying to do the best he or she can. You sometimes need a crystal ball to understand the organization and its request.



General Lynn Ashton meets with grant committee members and staff on March 29, 2021 to discuss 2021 grant requests.

But as the saying goes – you can't judge a book by its cover; neither can you judge a grant application by the written document.

The Kentucky Colonels are not like any other granting organization. We're unique, just like our next step is unique to the Kentucky Colonels. And this step is critical to our final approval process. The hardworking members of our board fan out across the state and make face-to-face visits with each non-profit that has requested funding. These face-to-face meetings put everything not only into perspective but also give real meaning to the request and the individuals that each organization serves. Time consuming – yes. Invaluable – definitely!

A person-to-person meeting can confirm a perspective or totally change a perspective. In all cases it brings to life the mission and challenges these non-profits face daily. How do you define severely disabled until you meet the people that deal with this issue and meet

their clients? How do you assess the impact of music/literature/history on children and the community until you experience the impact and life-enhancing benefits of these organizations? How would you ever know that the volunteers are mulching/painting/cleaning so that the clients they serve will not only have a better environment but also allow more budget dollars to be funneled to achieving their mission. It's not something that can be gleaned from a written document. These face-to-face meetings expose you to the essence and heart of the non-profits with whom we work.

**Face-to-Face**  
**Continued on page 15 ►**



# Charles Todd

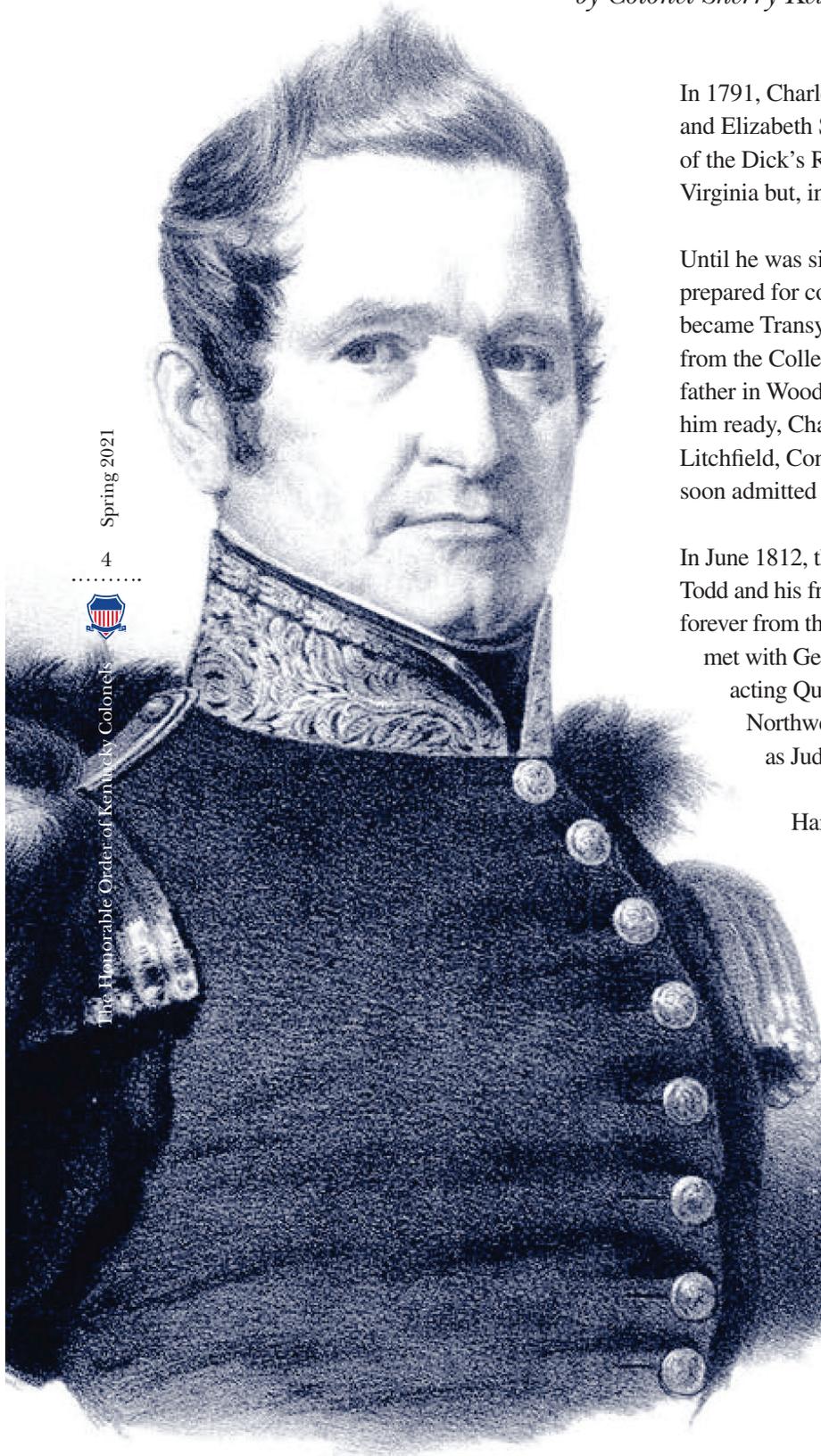
by Colonel Sherry Keith Jelsma

In 1791, Charles Stewart Todd was born to Judge Thomas Todd and Elizabeth Stewart Harris Todd at the Judge's home on a fork of the Dick's River, near Danville. Then, the land was called Virginia but, in 1792, it would become a new state, Kentucky.

Until he was sixteen years old, Todd was tutored in classics and prepared for college at the "University at Lexington," (which later became Transylvania University). He transferred to and graduated from the College of William and Mary. Todd studied law with his father in Woodford County, Kentucky. When Judge Todd thought him ready, Charles entered Judge Tapping Reeve's Law School in Litchfield, Connecticut; the only law school in America, and was soon admitted to the bar.

In June 1812, the US Congress declared war against Great Britain. Todd and his friends rushed to enlist in the militia and free America forever from the British. Weeks later, with help of his father, Todd met with General William Henry Harrison, who appointed him acting Quartermaster in the Advance of the Left Wing of the Northwestern Army. The following year, 1813, Todd served as Judge Advocate for Kentucky troops.

Harrison ordered Todd to carry his instructions as to the battle of River Raisin to the unpopular General James Winchester. The headstrong Winchester chose to ignore General Harrison's orders. The encounter at "the Raisin" was a terrible loss. General Harrison sent Todd, then serving as his aide, to Kentucky to inform Governor Shelby of the tragic and bloody massacre. Arriving muddy and bedraggled at Frankfort's assembly hall, Todd momentarily forgot the horror at the Raisin and saw only the beautiful presence of the Governor's youngest daughter, Letitia Shelby. She was seventeen; Charles was twenty-five. It was love at first sight. They were married in the Governor's Mansion in Frankfort in 1816.



Governor Shelby appointed Todd Inspector General of the Military District and brevetted him Colonel of the Kentucky Cavalry. Later, Governor George Madison appointed Todd as Kentucky Secretary of State, and he later ran and was elected to the state legislature.

By 1819, Colonel Todd had lost money in land deals in Frankfort, but President James Monroe offered Todd the position of Confidential Agent to Colombia and Venezuela. A few months after landing on Margarita Island, he contracted yellow fever and returned to the United States to regain his health. Todd found despair in Kentucky; Governor Shelby had barely survived a stroke; America's debtors' prisons were full, and whipping posts for debtors were put to use on Frankfort's Main Street.

Colonel Todd returned to Bogota in 1822, but he could not understand Simon Bolivar and the wild destruction by his troops, murder, and cruelty, and he asked to return to the United States. Colonel Todd settled down to tend his farm and raise cattle imported from Europe. He wrote articles and speeches for political causes and local journals. People liked to work with him, and, like a good Kentucky Colonel, he enjoyed everyone he met. He and Letitia built their home on this farm between 1830 and 1832, with bricks made on the farm. Colonel Todd joined Henry Clay and William H. Harrison working to improve agriculture. Todd became editor of the Franklin Farmer, a weekly paper that brought news of farming to the region.

When cholera struck Shelby County, the Todds lost three children in one week. With great determination,

Todd pulled himself together and put his energy into coaxing Harrison to run for President, with the slogan "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too." Harrison gave his inauguration speech with no hat or heavy coat and died of pneumonia six days later. Vice President Tyler removed Harrison's allies from the Cabinet and put in his choices, ruining Todd's political plans to be ambassador to Austria.

With his endless lobbying and help of friends, Todd secured the ambassadorship to St. Petersburg, Russia. Saying goodbye to his family

agricultural ideas for better farming and worked with Emperor Nicholas to bring American engineers to Russia to develop a railroad and a factory to produce locomotive engines and train cars. During his time in Russia, he connected James Whistler's family with the Emperor's art school, where he took lessons and later produced the famous portrait of his mother.

Todd returned to the United States in 1846 to great popularity, causing the Whigs to urge him to run for Governor in 1848, but Todd refused.



*The inauguration of William Henry Harrison in March of 1841.*

and farm, the Colonel set off for Russia with boxes of agricultural tools and packets of seeds to see how Russians worked their crops. He visited the Imperial Botanical Gardens, the art collection at the Hermitage, and the Imperial Society for Cultivation of Agriculture, to which Todd was the first American to be admitted.

He gave the Russians tobacco and "ship oak" seeds and other

In 1858, the Todds sold their Shelby County home and farm and lived with their daughter in Owensboro until their deaths. 🇺🇸

#### **About the Author**

*Sherry Keith Jelsma is the author of Political Quickstep: The Life of Kentucky's Colonel Charles S. Todd. She and her late husband, Dr. Lawrence Jelsma, purchased and restored the home of Charles and Letitia Todd.*



# Sally Siebert

Philanthropist | Nurse | Decorated Reservist

People can count on Colonel Sally Siebert. When volunteers were needed to serve in Desert Shield, the commander of Colonel Siebert's reserve unit called on her. When health departments at various Kentucky counties needed short-term assistance, Siebert answered the call. When inmates at the Lexington Metro Detention Center needed medical care, she stepped up. Siebert was commissioned as a Kentucky Colonel in 1987 for her assistance with the Kentucky Commission on Women's convention.

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by Colonel Leslie M. Watkins

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The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels

Colonel Siebert's service to others began at an early age in her hometown of Bradford, Pennsylvania; where, as a young Girl Scout, she assisted with a troop for mentally challenged girls and volunteered each month at a clinic set up for orthopedic doctors from Erie to visit patients in Bradford. She was active in the Presbyterian Church youth

Hospital in Chu Lai from April of 1970 until April of 1971, working in the ward for prisoners of war, the intensive care unit, and the recovery room. On typical days, the hospital might perform 50 surgeries. On one particular day, the landing zone was overrun by North Vietnamese, sending 165 patients her way in only two hours. On another day,

In 1978, she began working as a Family and Pediatric Nurse Practitioner with the Lexington – Fayette County Health Department. While working there, she received a BSN from the University of Kentucky College of Nursing and was named the outstanding senior student. The University of Kentucky later named her Outstanding Alumnus of the Year



VA042547, James Evans Collection, Vietnam Center and Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive, Texas Tech University

*Unloading patients from a medevac helicopter at the 91st Evacuation Hospital emergency room. Siebert served at the 91st Evac from April of 1970 to April of 1971.*

group making summer mission trips, including to Buckhorn, Kentucky. One of her earliest remembrances of Kentucky was as a seven-year-old visiting My Old Kentucky Home on a trip with her grandmother.

Siebert joined the Army Student Nurse Program in June of 1968 before her 1969 graduation from the Hamot Hospital School of Nursing in Erie, Pennsylvania. She was commissioned as Second Lieutenant in the Army Nurse Corps in September of 1969 and was stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. She volunteered to go to Vietnam and served at the 91st Evacuation

Siebert was charged with managing the recovery room while the enemy shelled the outer perimeter of the hospital. Because of her work, especially on days such as these, Siebert was nominated by her chief nurse and awarded the Bronze Star.

While serving in the U.S. Army Reserve from 1973 to 1990, Colonel Siebert was stationed in California and Kentucky. In California, she attended and graduated from the Family Nurse Practitioner Program at the University of California – Davis and worked at the Mendocino Indian Health Clinic, in Ukiah, California, making home visits to rancherías.

during the College of Nursing's 50th anniversary.

She also attended the Command and General Staff College, a three-year school for reservists, and received the Student of the Year Award.

When Desert Storm began, Sally volunteered to serve once again. For six months, she was on active duty in a MASH unit preparing medical equipment for use in the MASH hospital. She later set up a hospital in Kuwait, where she served out the balance of her tour for over three months. At this hospital, she provided medical care to American soldiers,





plus patients from large United Nations refugee camps nearby.

Sally's time in the Army Reserve continued in Kentucky from 1991 to 1999, and she retired as a Lieutenant Colonel, Chief Nurse, 4209th Hospital, Lexington, Kentucky.

Retired from the Lexington Health Department since 2010, she now enjoys traveling, especially camping where she spends time fishing and reading. One of her favorite books is *Ike's Spies*, by Stephen Ambrose, but she enjoys anything from American history to spy thrillers.

The Kentucky Coalition of Nurse Practitioners and Nurse Midwives

and quality patient care. Sally was recognized specifically for her work seeing patients who did not have health insurance or were not able to get adequate care, especially with the HOPE Center, a homeless shelter in Lexington, and with inmates at the Metro Detention Center.

Philanthropy is important to Sally. She has given to the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels for almost 30 years. She said, "I am honored to support an organization striving to improve the lives of others facing illness, daunting medical bills, incarceration, unemployment, or substance abuse." Sally said she learned of the Colonel's outreach to those in need and organizations

provided. One particular grant has stayed with her over the years: an organization received money to buy a file cabinet – a small amount made a huge difference to that organization. For her, giving is more than paying it back or paying it forward as it offers hope and support to those who struggle, even more important now during the pandemic. And she was thrilled with the HOKC \$1,000,000 gift to the Team Kentucky Fund.

Sally has also established the Major Troy Gibson/Lieutenant Colonel Sally Siebert Scholarship in Honor and Memory of Military Nurses, and the Sally G. Siebert Scholarship for Nurse Practitioner Students at the University of Kentucky. She



*Retired since 2010, Colonel Siebert now enjoys traveling, especially camping where she spends time fishing and reading.*

recognized Sally for her service in 2015 with the Ellen Bailey Share the Light Award. The award is named for one of the founders of the coalition, now deceased. The recipient of the award emulates her style of quiet leadership, clinical excellence, service to the profession,

which do not have access or qualify for major grants when Senior Ambassador Glen Bastin invited her to an awards ceremony at the KET Center in Lexington. She was amazed at the number of grants awarded but said what especially impressed her was the hope HOKC grants

also gives regularly to a scholarship established by her parents at the University of Pittsburg at Bradford for nursing, medical, or veterinary students, continuing to demonstrate this Colonel's commitment to personal achievement and service to community, state, and nation. 🇺🇸

# The Colonel of the Derby

by Colonel Chris Goodlett

Colonel Matt J. Winn, so known for his long affiliation with the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels, was born Martin J. Winn on June 30, 1861, in Louisville, Kentucky, the son of Patrick Winn and Julia Flaherty Winn. Winn grew up an Irish Catholic, attended Catholic school until the age of 14, and then moved to Bryant and Stratton Business College to study bookkeeping and penmanship. His first work experience came as the assistant bookkeeper of Stanger Glass Company and as a traveling salesman for wholesale grocer Stege and Reilly. In 1887, Winn partnered with Ed Langan in a tailoring business, Winn & Langan. Winn served as business manager and Langan as the tailor. Due to Winn's success, the business eventually became known as M.J. Winn & Company. He became known throughout the community and received high praise within the state of Kentucky for his business acumen.

In 1888, Winn married Mary Rosa (Mollie) Doyle. Matt and Mollie had 10 children, nine girls and one boy. The boy, Robert, died in infancy, and two of the girls, Ethel and Martin,

also died very young. Until 1910, the family lived in the Portland neighborhood in a house once occupied by Winn's parents. The family eventually moved to West Broadway in Louisville. Mollie died in 1912, and Winn never remarried, continuing to raise his daughters by himself.

Matt Winn is inextricably tied to the Kentucky Derby, and his long association with Churchill Downs has made him a local legend. His attendance at the first Derby in 1875 is recounted in many sources, and the story is often romanticized. Some say he saw that first Derby from the back of his father's wagon or that he watched it from atop a tree in the infield. His official association with Churchill Downs began in 1902, when Winn joined a group of investors in purchasing the track to allegedly save it from bankruptcy.

Winn held several titles while on the management team at Churchill Downs and was a noted promoter who used marketing savvy and special events to become an

immediate asset to the track. Winn saw events as a way to keep the track in the press. For the 1903 Derby, he made plans to use the grounds for a post-race outdoor party. In June of that year, Winn scheduled concerts at the track. The first concert featured Weber's Military Band of Cincinnati, Ohio. A bandstand was erected on the grass and benches and chairs were provided for the audience. These types of promotions were seldom heard of before Winn came aboard.

Winn's team met and won great challenges early in their tenure. The year 1908 brought what Winn called his greatest fight ever as Louisville City Hall issued a statement saying that bookmaking was illegal, ending betting at the track. With no immediate ideas as to what to do, an answer was found in a local law dating back to 1878 which allowed French pools, also known as pari-mutuel wagering. For the 1908 Kentucky Derby, track management found a limited number of pari-mutuel machines. These were so successful that the track adopted them permanently and abandoned any





attempt to again legalize bookmaking. Of course, the pari-mutuel system is still the accepted form of betting at the country's racetracks.

Winn's countless hours of promotion helped him solidify the Derby as America's greatest race by the 1910s. According to Winn, the greatest coup came in 1915, when New York racing icon Harry Payne Whitney decided to send his filly Regret to Louisville for the Derby. Regret led wire-to-wire in the 1915 Kentucky Derby, becoming the first filly, or female horse, to win the event. Whitney's quote to the Daily Racing Form solidified the Derby nationally: "I don't care if she never wins another race, or if she never starts in another race... she has won the greatest race in America, and I am satisfied."

Winn oversaw the implementation of many of the Derby's greatest traditions. The singing of "My Old Kentucky Home," the garland of roses, the Kentucky Derby Gold Cup, and the mint julep souvenir glass are only some of the traditions started during his tenure. Most interestingly, Winn used his connections with the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels in bringing celebrities to the track. Two of the Order's founders, Anna Bell Ward and Charles Pettijohn, had connections to many Hollywood actors. Many of these celebrities received colonelships in the 1930s and attended the Derby as guests of the Honorable Order.

Toward the end of his tenure at Churchill Downs, Winn faced unique opportunities and challenges due to World War II. In 1942, the infield hosted cavalrymen, tanks, and other armaments from Fort Knox for an event popularly known as "Camp

Winn." This initiative raised \$120,000 for the Louisville War Fund. In 1943, government restrictions on travel threatened attendance at the Derby. Winn led an active letter-writing campaign to have out-of-town fans return their tickets. The 1943 running was dubbed a "Street Car Derby," as it was mostly locals that made up the 60,000 in attendance.

However, the year 1945 provided the greatest threat to the Kentucky Derby. In January, a federal ban on racing was enacted as the sport was

When the Germans surrendered in May, the racing ban was lifted. Churchill Downs chose June 9 to replace the regularly scheduled date of May 5. As fans knew the threat of cancellation was real, anticipation for the 1945 running was very high. Over 75,000 attended, an amazing amount considering the short notice, and a then record \$2.3 million was wagered on Derby Day, \$776,408 for the Derby alone.

Winn died on October 6, 1949, at the age of 88, still serving as president



*When approached in 1902 about purchasing/rescuing a financially imperiled Churchill Downs, Winn told track secretary Charlie Price*

***"I'd say no and make it stick for a thousand years if it involved anything but the Derby. But they mustn't stop running that race."***

seen as a drain on crucial resources needed for the war effort. Upon the announcement, *The New York Times* spoke with Churchill Downs officials who were "thinking of some way the 3-year-old classic, first run in 1875, can be perpetuated." Word quickly spread that Churchill would host the Derby with no spectators and no betting if necessary. National media wondered if Churchill might consider shifting the race to New York should that state be permitted to race in the spring. Winn told The United Press, in no uncertain terms, "The Derby would be run at his Kentucky track or not at all."

of Churchill Downs. The depth of his accomplishments was captured in his obituary in the *Louisville Courier-Journal* the day after his death, dubbing him the "... guiding light of the Kentucky Derby and Churchill Downs." Winn was inducted in the National Museum of Racing's Hall of Fame in 2017 in recognition of his significant contributions to the Thoroughbred industry. 🇺🇸

#### ***About the Author***

*Colonel Chris Goodlett is the Director of Curatorial & Educational Affairs for the Kentucky Derby Museum in Louisville, KY.*

*Colonel Matt Winn  
hosted cavalrymen  
from Fort Knox on the  
Churchill Downs infield  
in 1942.*



# CHALLENGER CENTER

bringing STEM into the classroom

by Colonel Tom Cravens,  
Director, Challenger Learning Center of Kentucky

Chances are anyone over the age of 50 knows where he or she was on January 28, 1986; a day in American history that is etched in the memories of those old enough to remember. That day, the Challenger Space Shuttle broke apart 73 seconds after lift-off at an altitude of 48,000 feet, resulting in the deaths of all seven crewmembers. Excitement over teacher Christa McAuliffe's presence on the shuttle had many schoolchildren viewing the launch live, and media coverage of the accident was extensive. Family members of the Challenger crew knew immediately they had to do something to transform this terrible tragedy into something positive for children who had witnessed the event. They were firmly committed to carrying on the spirit of their loved ones by continuing the Challenger crew's educational mission. Their efforts resulted in the creation of Challenger Learning Centers, now located worldwide.

For those who witnessed the tragedy, who could have imagined that 35 years later, young people from throughout the United States and three other countries would still be positively impacted by the events of that day? Who could have imagined that in Hazard, a small, rural town in southeastern Kentucky, over 160,000 students, in the past 22 years, would experience what it would be like to be an astronaut or mission control specialist, with many inspired and motivated to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)? The creation of the Challenger Learning Center of Kentucky (CLCKY), the first Challenger Learning Center in a rural area and the first Challenger Learning Center in Kentucky, is truly a miraculous story.

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Space Mission Simulations are the most well-known and popular programs offered at Challenger Learning Centers. Centers feature a Mission Control Center, modeled after the one at NASA's Johnson Space Center, and a futuristic Space Station laboratory where experiments are performed, and probes are assembled and "launched" for data collection. Networked computers, cameras, and video monitors link simulators together with an intercom system transmitting between mission control and the space station. Students play the roles of navigators, engineers, robot operators, doctors, and scientists as they work together for a successful mission. STEM concepts, taught in a pre-mission classroom unit, are applied during simulated missions in a fun and exciting way demonstrating their practical use in everyday life.

The CLCKY has expanded its STEM program offerings dramatically over the years to serve the needs of our region, with the following programs being offered:

**Summer STEM Programs**

Includes topics covering everything from the environment, living and working in space, robotics, and programmable electronics.

**Mars Invasion 2030: From Coal Camp to Space Camp**

Students investigate the similarities between coal mining and space science and how lessons learned from establishing coal camps in eastern Kentucky can be used to develop colonies when we go to Mars.

**FIRST LEGO League Robotics**

CLCKY hosts a regional robotics competition with approximately 150 students participating.

**STEM Outreach**

CLCKY is helping teachers implement Next Generation Science

Standards requirements by providing STEM instruction in classrooms across our region.

**MIT & Harvard Engineering Festival**

A two-day summer event with engineering students from MIT and Harvard offering STEM workshops for middle and high school students.

In surveys with former students, we found that the experiences they had at the Challenger Learning Center made a major impact on their attitude toward STEM subjects, on their choice of major in college, and in their chosen professions. They remembered their simulated mission in detail and recalled the feeling of excitement and accomplishment by working together with classmates to complete their task. They stressed how it made science fun and interesting, even to those students who typically didn't enjoy the subject. Many former Challenger students are now science teachers and have involved their students in the Center. They have explained the very special feeling of seeing the excitement in their students and understanding that from a child's perspective. One teacher told us that his Challenger experience gave him a different outlook on how to set up an effective classroom environment that is more positive and productive. Many told of how it planted a love for space in their heart and that now it is their favorite subject to teach. All described their experiences as positive, memorable, and attitude altering, sparking an even greater interest in science, space, and technology.

The Challenger Learning Center has been the fortunate recipient of several grants from the Kentucky Colonels. In 2018, the Colonels

funded a number of robot arms and communications headsets for the Center, replacing equipment that was malfunctioning and worn out by years of use by our young astronauts. This award also allowed us to update two projectors that improved the visual aspects of our program such as our mission briefings and our launch simulation. A subsequent grant in 2019 allowed the Center to purchase professional quality audio/visual equipment that has been used in student programming as well as improving our ability to promote and market our program through the website and social media. An additional purchase from this grant was used for Chromakey (Green Screen) equipment used in Challenger programs, both on-site and at partner locations. A Challenger student intern team was trained on the use of this equipment developing useful technical skills while also producing high-quality videos for instructional purposes. An example of the intern's work was an outdoor science summer camp titled, "Wild in Your Backyard" where young students were digitally edited into nature scenes with their favorite animals. At a Halloween event the interns digitally edited young people into horror movie and Halloween scenes. The Chromakey technology has been utilized in many other ways, including marketing and the creation of educational videos that have been put on our Facebook page.

The opportunity to apply for funds from the Kentucky Colonels has been a great help to our Challenger Learning Center, allowing us to replace antiquated equipment and develop new and exciting audio/visual programs. We appreciate the Colonels' support of the work we do in eastern Kentucky. 🇺🇸



# God's Food Pantry

*Hard Work, Faith, and Donations Help Feed Kentucky Families*

submitted by God's Food Pantry

A block building with a green awning on South Central Avenue in Somerset, Kentucky, is currently the home of a ministry with a big heart. Over the course of the past 39 years, the location and the building have changed. What hasn't changed is the desire to take care of those who are less fortunate. God's Food Pantry was formed in 1982, the result of a group of caring organizations and individuals coming together with a dream of making sure no one went hungry, and grew from feeding a few families in the 1980s, about 750 families in the year 2000, to over 4,000 families in 2020.

God's Food Pantry is now the largest-serving supplemental feeding agency in South Central Kentucky and is one of about 400 food pantries served by God's Pantry Food Bank in Lexington.

From the beginning, God's Food Pantry was financially supported solely through donations from

individuals, businesses, and churches and a small amount of grant funding, and this continues to be the case today. Originally staffed completely by volunteers, the agency hired a director as the need for their services grew and a dedicated paid staff person to facilitate the programs evolved. Currently, more than 30 people give about 300 volunteer hours per week to keep the ministry running. God's Food Pantry now employs eight individuals.

Brenda Russell became director of God's Food Pantry in late 2013. Russell was a seasoned nonprofit leader but was new to the food pantry business. However, her heart and passion for helping others was a perfect fit for God's Food Pantry. In the past seven years, there has been a huge increase in the number of people in need in Pulaski County, which has, in turn, created the need to grow the services offered through the agency. Since 2013, the number of families being served has increased

from 1,200 to 4,000, many using the services of the Pantry multiple times throughout the year.

Since its inception in 1982, the mission of God's Food Pantry has been to feed the hungry. While many think of providing food as the means to alleviate hunger, Russell had other ideas. She looked at other avenues of providing for families and found that hungry families have many needs beyond food. Russell believed that if God's Food Pantry could access necessary items such as toiletries, clothing, and household items, perhaps the families they serve could stretch their food budget dollars a bit further. She began searching for a network of nonprofit partners and resources to help, finding several that were a perfect fit.

During that search for partners, Russell realized how much families living in poverty struggled to access other needed resources, help paying utility bills, finding affordable



housing, accessing government programs, navigating the legal system, or finding healthcare. When those needs were paired with a lack of reliable transportation or no transportation at all, some situations became dire. Thus, Russell and the governing board of God’s Food Pantry began to give breath to a dream of pulling all needed resources together, with a food pantry, a feeding center (soup kitchen), a clothing center, and other like-minded help agencies all in one location. This dream would take time, hard work, and faith, but Russell was determined it could be done. In her words, “If it’s meant to be and God wants it, it will happen in spite of our efforts, not because of them!”

Soon three local churches partnered with God’s Food Pantry to provide hot meals three nights each week. With coordination, a feeding center was born – in three separate locations. The pantry provided the food. The churches provided the location, the labor, and the love; a start in the right direction.

In 2018, God’s Food Pantry partnered with a nonprofit called Good360. Through them, the pantry had access to truckloads of clothing and household items that could then be shared with families in need and other nonprofits. The sheer abundance of products coming in allowed God’s Food Pantry to open “Our Place,” a redistribution center, in 2019, sharing much-needed items with over 60 other agencies across southern Kentucky.

The year 2020 was truly unforgettable. God’s Food Pantry continued to serve the hungry through the pandemic. In this difficult year, it seemed that expansion plans would need to be put on hold. However, Somerset

Pulaski Economic Development Authority (SPEDA) saw what God’s Food Pantry was trying to accomplish and offered to sell them (at a greatly reduced price) a property SPEDA owned, located about three blocks from their existing location. The property contains two huge buildings, the perfect answer to housing multiple agencies in one location.

God’s Food Pantry has since completed the purchase, and the staff is now dreaming of other ways to make lives better for the people in their community. Their dreams include helping people move their lives forward, not just giving them a handout, a place where the hungry can find food; the unemployed can make connections to education and employers; and the homeless can shower, wash clothes, get a haircut, and receive mail. The feeding center can be used after hours for substance abuse and addiction meetings or community meetings. God’s Food Pantry hopes to establish an education center to provide help with getting a GED, seminars on health and life skills such as budgeting and cooking, building and repairing credit, and homeownership. Another dream is for a chapel staffed by members of the faith community as a listening ear for someone in the depths of despair.

When she was asked about the impact the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels has had on God’s Food Pantry, Russell said, “The Kentucky Colonels have played a key role in helping us move forward and grow. Grants received from the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels have helped get the redistribution center up and running and are positively impacting thousands of families across southern Kentucky. The

ripples created by that giving will be far-reaching for decades to come.” She continued by saying, “The partnership with the Kentucky Colonels has been priceless to our organization and to me personally. They are as passionate about being compassionate as I am, and individuals from the organization regularly check in with me just to make sure we are all doing well. That means the world to me. I appreciate their caring hearts and look forward to working with them in the future to make life better for as many as we can.” 🇺🇸

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**Face-to-Face  
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With each visit we come away humbled by the number of selfless individuals working in the non-profit arena, working so hard to make a difference. Our grants cover a wide variety of categories – community enhancement, education, health, life skills, historic preservation, homeless, those in crisis, veterans, and youth just to name a few. But ultimately our job is to make sure that each of your donated dollars is invested in an organization that makes a difference. I admit that I’m biased. The reason that I’ve been involved with the Kentucky Colonels was to make a difference. A difference that’s tangible. A real difference, one that I could see and be proud of. I’ve been blessed to have been a part of the Kentucky Colonels and, specifically, intimately involved in the grant process. My wish to make a difference has been made real and being part of this organization is one of my proudest achievements. Rest assured that your donations will always be invested with the utmost care and that you can also be extremely proud of being a Kentucky Colonel and of our Good Works Program. 🇺🇸



*Forever Changed*

*Because a Colonel Gave.*

In 2020, the Good Works Program provided more than \$3.1 million in grants to nonprofits delivering critical services to Kentuckians in need. These grants are possible only because Colonels like you chose to continue their philanthropy through regular contributions to the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels.

On behalf of the 3.9 million people whose lives are forever changed by these nonprofits, we thank you for your generosity.



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