



**AppalReD**  
Legal Aid

*Volunteer Lawyers for Appalachian Kentucky*

*Fall 2016*



*From VLAKE Director  
Mary Going...*

It's been quite some time since VLAKE last published a newsletter, and a lot has changed! No longer on Court Street, the VLAKE office is now located in AppalReD's main building at 120 North Front Avenue in Prestonsburg. Likewise, VLAKE's webpage can now be found within AppalReD's website at [www.ardfky.org](http://www.ardfky.org). These changes have made it possible for us to better integrate our efforts into the larger mission of AppalReD—to provide access to a wide range of civil legal services to persons in eastern and south central Kentucky who would be unable to afford such assistance otherwise.

An exciting new initiative for us in providing this access is our development of pro se materials and clinics throughout our service area, initially in the area of uncontested divorces, to make our pro bono and reduced-fee attorneys available for more complex case work. We continue to partner with other legal service programs, courts and social service agencies to offer comprehensive assistance to those facing difficult challenges in navigating their day-to-day lives. We are grateful for your help!

*VLAKE Conducts Pro Se Divorce Clinic*

VLAKE conducted its first assisted pro se divorce clinic on August 8, 2016. The clinic, held at the Floyd County Library in Prestonsburg, offered eligible clients from Floyd, Johnson, Magoffin, Knott, Martin and Lawrence Counties who wished to pursue uncontested divorces an opportunity to do so without the need to obtain direct representation from an attorney. Clinic clients received generalized instruction on the process of filing a civil pro se case, as well as individualized assistance in completing the necessary forms. Notary publics were available on-site, and clients were instructed on how to file their completed documents with the circuit or family court clerks.

VLAKE was assisted in this project by Rural Summer Law Corps Fellow Joseph Bonica, a student at the University of Mississippi School of Law. Joe did a significant amount of work researching Kentucky family law and developing informational packets on divorce and custody for the use of clients and the general public. Joe also conducted the Floyd County clinic, and developed model procedures for VLAKE's future pro se clinics.



*Rural Summer Law Corps  
Fellow  
Joseph Bonica*



"FUNDED BY THE LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION, THE COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY, KENTUCKY IOLTA FUNDS, OTHER FEDERAL FUNDS AND PRIVATE DONATIONS"  
[WWW.KYJUSTICE.ORG](http://WWW.KYJUSTICE.ORG)



While statistics are not especially exciting to read, they can be informative. For instance, the graph below reflecting cases accepted by attorneys between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016 is notable as it reflects only 31 of AppalReD/VLAK's 37 counties. **Please help us get the word out to potential clients as well as attorneys that we are available to help those unable to afford legal assistance with civil legal matters, especially in our underserved counties.**

*Attorneys who accepted new pro bono and reduced-fee cases from 7/1/15 to 6/30/16 (Note: attorneys responding to the SSD/SSI Crisis are listed on next page).*

Katherine Adams  
 Karen Alfano  
 Howe Baker  
 Jonathan Baker  
 Keisha Caldwell  
 Seth Combs  
 Kent Cooper  
 Stefanie Ebbens-Kingsley  
 Rhonda Girdner  
 Trina Gregory  
 Susan Ham  
 Jill Haste  
 Joshua Howard  
 Melissa Howard  
 Tammy Howard  
 Whitney Howard  
 Monica Lacy  
 Gary Little  
 Mickey McGuire  
 Angela Mullins  
 Bruce Orwin  
 Daryle Ronning  
 Michael Roper  
 Amber Sisco  
 Danny Smith  
 Neal Smith  
 Marsha Taylor  
 Mike Taylor  
 David Ward  
 Beth Wesley

County	Divorce	Custody	Bankruptcy	Consumer	Wills	SSI	SSD	Totals
Adair	2	1	1					4
Bell	2							2
Breathitt	1						1	2
Casey	1							1
Clay							1	1
Clinton	1	1						2
Clark	1		1					2
Cumberland							1	1
Estill	1						1	2
Floyd	5	1	1		1	30	117	155
Garrard			1					1
Harlan	1							1
Jackson	1							1
Johnson	1		1			15	32	50
Knott	1					7	16	24
Knox	1							1
Laurel		1				1	1	3
Lawrence						4	9	13
Lee	1						1	2
Leslie		1						1
Letcher	1					2	22	25
Lincoln	4					1		5
Madison	3						2	5
Magoffin						4	19	23
Martin	1					2	21	24
Monroe			1					1
Perry	7	3				5	21	36
Pike			1			16	99	116
Pulaski	6		1	1				8
Wayne	2							2
Wolfe	1							1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>511</b>

*Attorneys Needed!*

VLAK is in need of attorneys throughout our service region to accept pro bono and reduced-fee civil cases for direct representation, as well as to assist with pro se clinics at sites throughout the region. Malpractice insurance is provided. If you are interested in this opportunity to serve your community, please contact Mary Going at [maryg@ardfky.org](mailto:maryg@ardfky.org) for more information.





## VLAK Launches National Response to Area SSD/SSI Crisis

In May of 2015, VLAK found itself facing a daunting challenge—that of finding pro bono representation for a very large number of persons who received letters from the Social Security Administration informing them that their SSD and/or SSI benefits were being reviewed, due to fraud allegedly perpetrated by attorney Eric C. Conn, four medical professionals, and an Administrative Law Judge. Those clients receiving SSD benefits were initially informed that they would lose these benefits without a hearing (an injustice later rectified). The suddenness and confusion of this announcement led directly to several suicides among clients dependent on this source of income to meet basic living expenses; that tragedy, as well as an awareness of the situation’s impact on the local economy in this part of Appalachia, made it imperative that AppalReD respond immediately and effectively to this representational crisis.

With the help of the Kentucky Bar Association, the National Organization of Social Security Representatives (NOSSCR) and too many individuals to count, we were able to assemble a team of attorneys throughout the country who have now represented approximately 450 of these clients at the administrative level. More than 200 other of these clients are being represented in-house by AppalReD attorneys. We have, in the process, been pushed to develop new organizational and technological skills, including the use of Skype to facilitate communication between our clients and their volunteer attorneys. The generosity and ingenuity of these attorneys and their staffs has been boundless, and it would be impossible to adequately thank all who have been involved. They have formed something of a community among themselves, communicating information about this unique situation by way of a very effective list serve.

Most of these cases have now entered the appeals stage, including appeals to federal district court on procedural and other issues. A parallel effort to address the matter is being pursued through class action suits in KY and WV through the diligent efforts of Prestonsburg attorney Ned Pillersdorf, AppalReD’s Emeritus Executive Director John Rosenberg and others.

This has been a challenging time for AppalReD, but we have learned that when a crisis presents itself, we are indeed capable of rising to the occasion and walking with the people of eastern and south-central Kentucky as they navigate this difficult situation.

### *Pro Bono Attorneys Responding to SSD/SSI Crisis*

#### **Arizona**

Amy Foster

#### **California**

Mark Abell  
Kenneth Collins  
Erika Drake  
Terry LaPorte  
Rigoberto Vindiola

#### **Colorado**

Ann Atkinson  
Blythe Glemming  
Ann Norton

#### **Connecticut**

Maurice Maitland  
Ivan Ramos  
Diane Sauer

#### **D.C.**

Wilmer Hale Law Office  
Martin Keane

#### **Florida**

Carol Avard  
Stuart Barasch  
Stephen Freeman  
Suzanne Harris

Morgan & Morgan Law Office

#### **Georgia**

Tamara Caldas  
Charles Martin  
Mark Reeves

#### **Illinois**

Stacey Dembo  
Mary Kopko  
Kevin Linder  
Jim Schiff  
Barry Schultz

#### **Indiana**

Annette Rutkowski  
Ted Smith

#### **Iowa**

Janice Binder  
Niki Fisher  
Thad Murphy

#### **Kentucky**

Steven Bailey  
Mike Bowling  
Molly Burke  
Kathy Burke  
Angela Call  
Scott Collins  
Ronald Cox  
Richard Dawahare  
Christopher Douglas  
Stefanie Ebbens-Kingsley

Ashley Ervin  
Bob Ewald  
Shannon Fauver  
Suzanne Graves  
Cherie Hinkle  
Craig Housman  
Derek Humfleet  
John Earl Hunt

Rhonda Hatfield-Jeffers

Chris Jenkins  
Falin Jensen  
Warren Keller  
Katherine Kendall  
James Kerr  
Joseph Lane  
Carrie Link  
Danny Lunsford  
Nicholas Maggard  
Will Matthews  
Pam May  
Brandon May  
John Morgan  
Mark Morgan  
Shameka O’Neil  
Laraclay Parker  
Ned Pillersdorf  
D. Tyler Roberts  
Danielle Rodriguez  
Daryle Ronning

Steve Sanders  
Gregory Schmitt  
Bill Slone  
Evan Smith  
Trevor Smith  
John Sowards  
John Tackett  
Matt Tatman  
Marsha Taylor  
Mike Taylor  
Arnold Turner  
Andrea Welker  
Jessica Wilkett  
Sarah Woods  
Shea Yoakums

#### **Louisiana**

Ben Misko

#### **Michigan**

Vicki Corr  
Robert Reilman  
Elizabeth Warren

#### **Minnesota**

Sarah Eyberg

#### **Missouri**

Julie Burkett  
Dennis Fox

#### **Nevada**

Mark Rouse

#### **New Jersey**

Adrienne Jarvis  
Laura McNally Levine

#### **New York**

Bill Gottlieb

#### **North Carolina**

Derrick Arrowood  
Ervin Brown  
Charles Hall  
Bethany Hukill  
Ashley Maxwell  
Monica Savidge

#### **Ohio**

John Abaray  
Carol Herdman  
John Nicholson  
Debra Shifrin  
Bob Solltis

#### **Oregon**

Kevin Kerr

#### **Pennsylvania**

David Axinn  
Elizabeth Bett  
Jenny Kaufmann  
Damian Leone  
Jeffrey Lichtman  
Katherine Niven  
Marjorie Portnoy  
Robert Savoy  
Danny Smith  
Susan Toler  
Sue Wasserkrug

#### **Tennessee**

Edwin Anderson

#### **Texas**

Joe Crescenzo

#### **Vermont**

Cristina Mansfield

#### **Virginia**

John Goss  
Heath Hixson  
Sabrena Whitt  
Joe Wolfe

#### **Washington**

Mark Bunch  
Maureen Cleary  
Amy Condon





## *Volunteer Lawyers for Appalachian Kentucky*

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*Volunteer Lawyers for Appalachian Kentucky is an entity of Appalachian Research & Defense Fund of KY. Its mission is to supplement AppalReD Legal Aid's resources by engaging the private bar in providing access to high quality legal representation, advice and other assistance in civil legal matters to those in its service area who because of their low income would otherwise be without such support.*

**VLAK serves the following counties in eastern and south-central Kentucky: Adair, Bell, Breathitt, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Estill, Floyd, Garrard, Harlan, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Monroe, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Rockcastle, Russell, Wayne, Whitley and Wolfe.**



There is far too much law for those who  
can afford it and far too little for those  
who cannot.

— Derek Bok

