



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2022.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Category: \_\_\_\_\_

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**VACO Achievement Awards**  
**Parks and Recreation**  
**Franklin County Bunnies on the Move**

**Overview**

The highly anticipated Annual Easter Egg Hunt was not able to be held in its traditional form due to Covid-19 restrictions. In years past, the Easter Egg Hunt had helped build a sense of community in Franklin County by bringing thousands of people together for the celebration. The absence of this program was especially felt as people had been experiencing higher levels of isolation, loneliness and stress.

Franklin County Parks and Recreation staff completely reinvented the event into a mobile program called “Bunnies on the Move”. Instead of bringing the people to the event, volunteers and staff would take the event to the people across the county.

The goal of Bunnies on the Move was to promote the unique sense of community that Franklin County has with an emphasis on reaching people that were isolated and underserved. The program was expanded to include people of all ages. Anyone who needed a friendly visit could simply call a dedicated phoneline called the “Bunny Line” to schedule a personalized visit from the Easter Bunny and an egg hunt. Volunteers from the community would provide a friendly visit to show that they cared about their wellbeing. These visits from the “Easter Bunny” had the advantage of reaching persons in need without any stigma.

Parks and Recreation staff found that the “Bunnies on the Move” was so popular that it was expanded to reach even more people. A drive-through visit with the Easter Bunny was

held at the Office of Aging where seniors could have their photo taken with the Easter Bunny and receive a basket with goodies. Three local nursing homes requested that the Bunnies on the Move make a visit.

Bunnies on the Move was able to reach so many people because of volunteer support. Parks and Recreation recruited volunteers from the community and partnered with the Franklin County High School and Ferrum College to serve 1,408 families through 108 visits and 35,200 hidden eggs. The Bunnies on the Move model is a great way to uniquely celebrate a spring event while fostering a sense of community and reaching isolated persons without any stigmas.

## **Problem**

The highly anticipated Annual Easter Egg Hunt was not able to be held in its traditional form due to Covid-19 restrictions. The Easter Egg Hunt traditionally built a sense of community by bringing nearly 3,000 people together for the celebration. The absence of this program would especially be felt as more people have been experiencing isolation and loneliness.

## **Solution**

To completely reinvent the program. Instead of bringing people to the event, we would take the event to the people. The event was rebranded as “Bunnies on the Move” and staff worked with an army of volunteers. These volunteers provided visits to children’s homes, assisted living facilities, public safety personnel, and drive through visits for seniors.

## **Costs**

This community recreation program cost \$900.00 for 12 bunny suits, \$200.00 for 300 chocolate bars, and \$500.00 for 100 Easter baskets with goodies. Over 30,000 plastic filled eggs were available from the previous year's purchase. The total cost the program came in at \$1,600.00 to put on a FREE program that served 1,430 individuals. The total expense per visit was just \$1.12.

## **Impact**

A total of 1,430 clients received a visit through the Bunnies on the Move program for 2021. This included visits to 1,008 children's homes, visits to three nursing homes with over 300 patients visited, and an Easter Bunny Drive Through Social that attracted 130 senior citizens. This program reached children, senior citizens, shut ins, local 911 dispatch office, the local humane society, and nursing homes. We were fortunate to serve all ages and abilities.

Bunnies on the Move served individuals from all ages and abilities throughout Franklin County. Infants to elders were given an experience that they will never forget. In a world facing isolation and loneliness this program brought happiness and individual fun to each and everyone that requested a visit. We are glad that something as simple as a "Bunny Visit" or Easter basket impacted over 1,400 individuals. We were glad that we could bring an experience

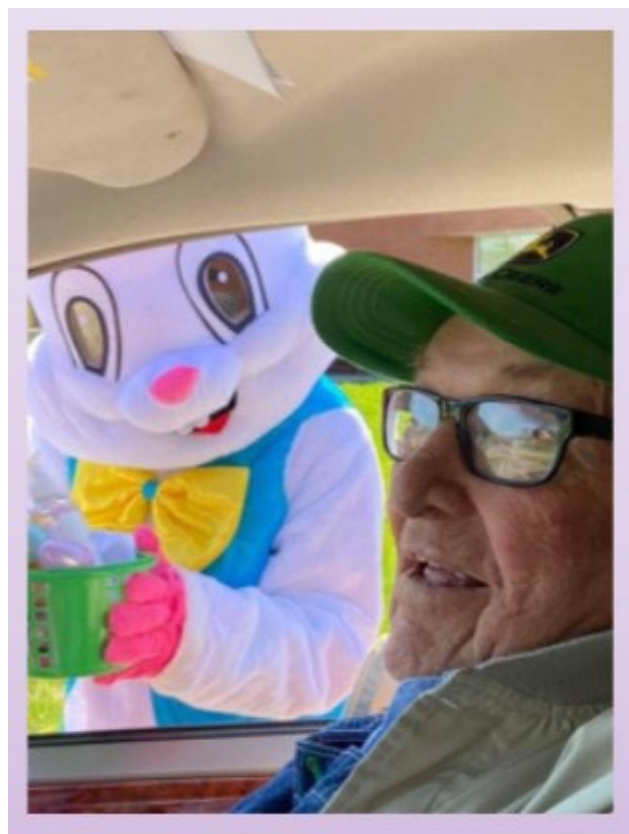
to each and everyone's doorstep and never underestimate the impact that you may have on someone's else's life.



Item 1: promotional flier



Item 2: Volunteer recruitment flier



Item 3: Drive-through for Seniors



Item 4: Drive-through for seniors



Item 5: Visit to a young adult's home



Item 6: Visit to a child's home



Item 7: Ferrum College volunteer