



# BUILDING NEW POWER IN 2010

Kentuckians For The Commonwealth

2010 Annual Report

KFTC is a statewide, member-led grassroots organization working for a new balance of power and a just society. We have 7,000 members in 100 of Kentucky's 120 counties, including 13 local chapters.

"We're a group of people who are organized to give a voice to the common person and to make things better for the common person."

*Layton Register, KFTC member*

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# 2010, One of Our Most Successful Years Ever!

Dear Friends,

In 2011, KFTC celebrates 30 years of envisioning a better Kentucky. Working side by side, ordinary people have achieved stunning victories and shaped our state for the better.



By almost any measure, 2010 was one of KFTC's biggest years ever. Our members influenced public policy, enforcement of mining laws, litigation, elections and exciting developments around clean energy. We were at the table in numerous important conversations affecting our environment, our health, our state budget and our democracy.

We met nearly 20 times with federal agencies, from the EPA to the Office of Surface Mining and the White House Council on Environmental Quality, to demand full and fair enforcement of mining laws. We launched the New Power Leader program to help us grow to 25,000 members in the next five years. We communicated directly with over 150,000 voters, added two new chapters, and hit a record \$300,000 in grassroots fundraising. Four of the five new city council members, including the mayor, in the mountain community of Wayland are KFTC members. And, in one of our biggest victories in a very long time, we stopped a coal-burning power plant in a coal state.

As much as we've changed, we've also stayed the same, keeping our eyes on the vision articulated by our grassroots leaders more than a decade ago:

*We have a vision. We are working for a day when Kentuckians—and all people—enjoy a better quality of life. When the lives of people and communities matter before profits. When our communities have good jobs that support our families without doing damage to the water, air, and land. When companies and the wealthy pay their share of taxes and can't buy elections. When all people have health care, shelter, food, education, and other basic needs. When children are listened to and valued. When discrimination is wiped out of our laws, habits, and hearts. And when the voices of ordinary people are heard and respected in our democracy.*

Today, in this moment, our seat at the table is more important than ever. We have the opportunity to build on all of our progress in 2010 to finally end mountaintop removal, create thousands of new jobs in clean energy, transition Appalachia to a healthier economy, pass progressive tax reform, and win voting rights for former felons.

In these pages, we look back at all we accomplished in 2010 and look forward to all we have yet to do together.

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Steve Boyce".

Steve Boyce  
KFTC Chairperson

# 2010 Program of Work

In 2008, KFTC launched the New Power Initiative to elevate our strategies, integrate our campaigns, and grow our membership. To win change in a state that seems often to be moving backward, we needed to heighten our game – while preserving all that makes us who we are.

We're building new economic power so all Kentuckians have access to good jobs, good schools, health care, and a fair tax system. We're building new energy power by pushing industries and decision-makers to emphasize renewable energy, respect the environment, and create new, safe jobs. And we're building new political power in which our government leaders represent the interests of all Kentuckians and everyone has a voice.

In 2010, as we elevated our primary strategies, we gained major ground on winning issues.

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# Primary Strategies: Leadership Development

Leadership Development is the key to our success and the first among equals of our primary strategies. We help ordinary people become extraordinary leaders.

The centerpiece of the New Power Initiative is New Power Leaders – grassroots leaders who lead clusters of 5 or more people in their communities on issues, fundraising, and more. We recruited 150 New Power Leaders in 2010 and held a New Power Leader training retreat in which leaders practiced having conversations with cluster members.



We also gave leaders numerous opportunities to learn about issues and refine their skills through sit-down meetings with federal mining officials, conversations with lawmakers in Frankfort and Washington D.C., training with the Tax Fairness Organizing Collaborative, and trips to the Colombian coalfields and the U.S. Social Forum.

In 2011, we'll support our New Power Leaders, recruit 250 more leaders, and refine the New Power Leader website and handbook. We'll continue our other core leadership development activities, including skill building workshops, spokesperson trainings, and more.

*"We want to make every KFTC member more informed about issues than the average bear. When we have thousands of informed, concerned folks talking to each other and impacting their communities, then elected officials will pay attention."*

*Greg Capillo, New Power Leader*

# Primary Strategies: Communications

Communications connect our members to our issue campaigns, to each other, and to the world we're working to change. We spent much of 2010 examining and reimagining our communications program to make it more integrated with our other strategies, more robust, and more effective.

A team of staff and consultants explored our vision, goals, roles, protocols and processes in a strategic communications planning process.

Then we put our ideas and questions to work in a major New Power media campaign with radio, web, and print ads, a website and a New Power Pledge. In our messaging, we promoted the theme "It's time for New Power!" – using the faces and voices of our own members. Through the process, we increased our skills and capacity tremendously.

In 2011, we'll redesign our website and integrate it with a new database to support on-the-ground organizing and voter empowerment, expand our member base and our relationship with members, give us more communications options, and facilitate grassroots fundraising. Building New Power will be central to our messaging.

**IT'S TIME FOR NEW POWER**

We are *Kentuckians.*

We work hard.  
We love our families.  
We care for our communities.

When we go to the polls on November 2, we'll cast our votes for:

**Clean energy jobs  
Affordable renewable energy  
Healthy communities**

*"We have the chance to create thousands of new jobs in energy efficiency, in renewable energy production, in land restoration, and in a rebirth of small-scale agriculture. If we're going to build a new, sustainable economy, we have to stop the destruction of our land, especially by mountaintop removal." — Beverly May, Floyd County*

*"It's important for places that rely on coal jobs today to be at the front of the transition to the new energy jobs of the future. Coal miners and coal communities need better options. I'm convinced Kentucky can make these better choices and build a better future for us all." — Tona Barkley, Owen County*

*"With courageous and honest political leadership, our people can be at the forefront of the transition to new power and a stronger, healthier economy. We can create new clean energy jobs and reduce the harm caused by our dependence on fossil fuels." — K.A. Owens, Louisville*

If you think it's time for New Power, join us and thousands of other Kentuckians.

**Sign the New Power Pledge at:**  
[www.newpowerky.org](http://www.newpowerky.org)

**Tona Barkley & Dallas Ratliff**  
District 1  
Electric Board of Directors

at the co-op annual meeting,  
June 25th, 4:30 - 7:00 p.m.,  
Hunty High School, Dry Ridge

**KENTUCKIANS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH**  
PO Box 1450, London, KY 40743

**SAVE THE MOUNTAINS**  
YOU RISE UP

Please join us in Frankfort

**I Love Mountain**  
Thursday February 17  
Protect Kentucky's Land. Water  
Give us the safe jobs that we

**It's Time for New Power**  
—and time elected officials support the interests of a select few. It's time to protect our heritage while embracing the economy in Eastern Kentucky that doesn't poison our water and workers, and ensure there's new clean energy jobs.

10:30 a.m. Gather at the Kentucky River  
11:30 a.m. March to the Capitol that runs  
12:30 p.m. Rally and music on the cap

More than 1,000 miles of assessment  
severely damaged by years of mount  
wells and clean energy gases a  
February 17.

RSVP at [www.KFCC.org/LOV](http://www.KFCC.org/LOV)  
Sponsored by: Kentuckians For

**Kentucky's New Power: Youth Debate the Real Issues in the U.S. Senate Race**

Thursday, October 21st  
6:30 p.m. University of Kentucky: White Hall Classroom Building  
Room 102 (140 Patterson Drive) Parking in Lot E/C-7, located where Lime-  
stone/Upper meet -- on Scott. St.  
**FREE and Open to the Public**

Want to hear more than attack ads? Looking for leaders who offer real solutions? Care about affordable health care and college tuition, more good jobs here at home, a clean energy future, and equality for all?

Then join us for one of the only campaign events focused on key issues that matter to the next generation of Kentuckians. Youth from across Kentucky will address the real issues in the US Senate race. Come to learn and share your views!

This event is planned by and for Kentuckians aged 5 to 25. People of all ages are welcome.

**It's Time For NEW POWER!**  
Kentuckians For The Commonwealth

Paid for by New Power PAC, [www.newpowerky.org](http://www.newpowerky.org). Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee.

**Democracy — Did you know that the Owen**  
of last year to keep board meetings closed to  
Members of Owen Electric, you are owners, too.  
board elections. We will give members a  
I will affect us all for decades.

We will work to protect members from  
make sure the co-op really does have  
"y." In these hard times and always,  
ch more to help customers save

It will work to make sure Owen Electric  
plans and new energy choices that  
"co-op" invested in these proven  
power plants, we could create  
where we really need them

**Democracy back to co-op. Vote!**  
4:30 - 7:00 pm  
ing at 7:00 pm

**ANNUAL MEETING**  
Dry Ridge, KY  
Please bring a photo to vote. Each  
member has ONE vote. Bring photo ID.



# Primary Strategies: Organizational Development

Grassroots Fundraising and Membership Recruitment enable us to grow our base of informed and engaged members who invest in our vision with their time, talents and financial resources.

In 2010 we emphasized two goals: developing our major donor program and increasing our number of sustaining givers. We made progress on both fronts and laid some important groundwork for strengthening these programs in the coming year. Our major donor program included a successful Ashbourne Farms barn party in Louisville and targeted communication with these folks.

Establishing the New Power Leader program was another key piece of organizational development, as all NPLs are asked to become sustaining givers and to invite their cluster members to renew or join KFTC.

In 2011, we'll expand and refine these key areas with goals of \$350,000 in grassroots and major donor fundraising and 1,000 new members. And we'll use our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration to get more of our issues into the public discourse and potentially raise new funds.



# Primary Strategies: Voter Empowerment

Kentucky's political landscape is evolving, volatile, and in play. While Kentuckians elected Rand Paul as a U.S. senator, we also re-elected U.S. Rep. John Yarmuth, who stood firm on progressive positions and won despite being on the Palin target list.

KFTC is in the midst of this complicated landscape, working to create a stronger democracy and build more progressive political leadership. We broke records in 2010 with our most ambitious and successful voter empowerment effort ever.

We registered, educated and mobilized voters as we have for many years, but in 2010 we did better and more strategic targeted voter outreach using, for the first time, SmartVAN (voter activation network). We invested in capacity by adding a data manager and four year-long and 11 short-term voter empowerment organizers to engage, register and mobilize thousands of voters. Between one-on-one conversations, tabling at events, phone calls and mailings, we reached 150,000 voters in key districts.

KFTC also formed the New Power PAC to play a more visible and assertive role in Kentucky races. With the PAC we conducted an ambitious voter communications campaign that included extensive contact with voters across Kentucky, a major media campaign, website ([www.newpowerky.org](http://www.newpowerky.org)), New Power Pledge, youth forum, and more.

This added capacity produced results. Moderate



U.S. Rep. Ben Chandler came under heavy attack by the coal industry because he was the first coal-state Congressman to publicly oppose mountaintop removal. We mobilized tens of thousands of voters in this district, including a mailing that lifted up his New Power positions. He won by 647 votes.

Four of the five new city council members (and the mayor) in the tiny coal community of Wayland are KFTC members, as is the mayor of Louisville, Kentucky's largest urban center. Each spoke to New Power issues in their campaigns. Lexington also elected a progressive mayor, opening up new opportunities for work in that urban center.

We'll continue to engage and mobilize voters in 2011, when we have a governor's race and five other statewide constitutional officer races

*"The work KFTC is doing on voter empowerment is some of the best work around. We reach out to new voters based on issues; we follow through from registering voters to Election Day. It's true empowerment."*

*Antonio Mazzaro, KFTC Steering Committee Alternate  
and member of KFTC'S new Northern Kentucky Chapter*



# Primary Strategies: Chapter Building

We strengthen our work across Kentucky by developing strong local chapters, the building blocks of our organization.

In 2010 we added two vibrant new chapters in Scott County and Northern Kentucky. The Northern Kentucky chapter opens a whole new region for KFTC including the three counties bordering Cincinnati. This chapter has already grown to 200 members.

Now we have 13 chapters across Kentucky, and other communities are interested in starting their own chapters.

In 2011, we'll help the new chapters build a strong foundation, work with members in other communities who want to start chapters, and focus on strengthening all chapters through training, materials, strong local campaigns and more.



# Primary Strategies: Alliance Building

Alliances are a key piece of building our power in Kentucky and beyond.

This year we continued our strong partnership with the **Mountain Association for Community Economic Development** on the Appalachian Transition Initiative.

We moved forward with the **Alliance for Appalachia**, a group of 13 organizations in Central Appalachia working to end mountaintop removal.

We added new members to the **Kentucky Sustainable Energy Alliance**, a group of 31 organizations who have come together around common goals for energy policy.

And we continued our work with the **Kentucky Forward Coalition** on tax reform and the **Restoration of Voting Rights Coalition** on our campaign to restore voting rights to former felons.

Through the **Pushback Network**, we hosted a group from the **South West Organizing Project** in New Mexico who visited Eastern Kentucky and toured mountaintop removal sites. The exchange was an opportunity to draw connections between our



work around coal, SWOP's work around nuclear energy, and our shared goal to move to cleaner forms of energy.

In 2011, we'll strengthen our work with existing allies, expand alliances where it makes sense, and strengthen partnerships that increase our skills and capacity.





# Winning Issues: Canary Project

We launched the Canary Project in 2003 to build a better future – beyond coal – for Kentucky and the nation. The 10-year campaign encompasses enforcement of mining laws, new policies, economic development and alternative energy, with a special focus on ending mountaintop removal mining.

On enforcement, we gained ground this year at the federal level. Our members met nearly 20 times with the EPA, Office of Surface Mining, and the White House Council on Environmental Quality – in Washington D.C. and at home. The EPA announced new conductivity rules for streams that will curb mountaintop removal. And, due in large part to pressure from mountain communities,



"I think it is important to show them what it is we are trying to protect. We're not just fighting to stop the pollution of our water from coal companies, but we're trying to protect the streams we have left."

*KFTC Steering Committee member Rick Handshoe, who met multiple times with federal regulatory agencies in 2010*



# Winning Issues: Canary Project

the Army Corps of Engineers stopped using the Nationwide Permit 21 (a rubber-stamping process) to permit valley fills.

Nearly a thousand KFTC members and friends turned out for I Love Mountains Day in Frankfort in February. A group of KFTC youth met with the governor's staff, and other KFTC members later met with the governor himself. In September, nearly 120 people – at least a dozen of them KFTC members – were arrested at the White House during Appalachia Rising, a nonviolent action to protest mountaintop removal.



Locally, members fought mine permits that threatened their land and water. Two communities in Harlan and Clay counties filed

Lands Unsuitable for Mining Petitions to protect their watersheds. KFTC members in Jefferson County organized around a proposed coal ash landfill in the Cane Run neighborhood of Louisville. And Floyd County members appeared in the film *Deep Down*, which chronicled their successful efforts to protect their community from surface mining.



In 2011, we'll pressure federal agencies to hold their ground, strengthen our local campaigns, and continue to work for full and fair enforcement of mining laws.

# Winning Issues: Appalachian Transition

"I believe that right now, we have the best chance we've had in decades to build a new economy here in Eastern Kentucky. We have the chance to create thousands of new jobs in energy efficiency, in renewable energy production, in land restoration, and in a rebirth of small-scale agriculture."

*Bev May, Floyd County Steering Committee member*

With roots in the Canary Project, the Appalachian Transition Initiative is a partnership between KFTC and the Mountain Association for Community Economic Development to foster an economic, community, and workforce transition in Central Appalachia from an economy of coal and poverty to a more just, sustainable and prosperous future.

In 2010, we advanced that conversation with two conferences. The Growing Appalachia Conference at Jenny Wiley State Park in April included tracks on renewable energy and sustainable agriculture. A three-day sustainability symposium at Pine Mountain Settlement School in May focused on local food, energy and forestry.

We also began a listening project to learn the values, hopes, fears and opinions of people in Eastern Kentucky. We used those insights in a media campaign around the November elections, and KFTC members in Benham and Lynch compiled their interviews in a booklet titled "Visions From Black Mountain."

Residents of Benham and Lynch envision a new economy built on tourism and clean energy. They earned their community a spot on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places list for 2010 because of pending mining permits that threaten their plans.

In 2011, we'll deepen the local conversations and organizing to make transition more tangible to a broader population, especially in Eastern Kentucky.

[www.appalachiantransition.net](http://www.appalachiantransition.net)





# Winning Issues: Sustainable Energy Policy

Also a product of the Canary Project, our sustainable energy work focuses on passing good energy legislation that emphasizes efficiency and renewables, protects low-income people from rising costs, and leads to green jobs in Kentucky.

In 2009, KFTC was instrumental in forming the Kentucky Sustainable Energy Alliance (KySEA), a group of organizations from the housing, farming, nursing, environmental, energy, faith and small business sectors, all with an interest in clean, affordable energy.

In 2010, KySEA grew to 31 members and wrote a bill introduced in the Kentucky General Assembly that would have implemented a number of positive steps, including a Renewable and Efficiency Portfolio Standard (REPS) and feed-in tariffs for renewable energy production. The bill didn't pass, but KySEA members have taken what they



learned in 2010 and combined it with new information on state and federal energy policy to improve our bill for the 2011 session.

In addition to the bill, in 2011 KySEA will recruit new members and work to refine its communications strategy with an improved website and a "road show" presentation.

[www.kysea.org](http://www.kysea.org)



# Winning Issues: Stop Smith/Renew East Kentucky

For the past four years, KFTC has worked with our allies the Kentucky Environmental Foundation and the Sierra Club to prevent East Kentucky Power Cooperative from building a new coal-burning unit at its Smith Station power plant in Central Kentucky. We won a major victory and reached a turning point in the Stop Smith campaign when, on November 18, EKPC announced it would abandon plans for the Smith plant and enter a collaboration with KFTC and our allies to explore renewable energy and energy efficiency options for the co-op. This exciting news followed a particularly productive 2010 in which we:

- o Turned out more than 200 people for two public hearings on the plant;
- o Helped two KFTC members run for board seats in their local co-ops;



"I am very hopeful that this moment marks a turning point in Kentucky towards energy efficiency and renewable energy, both of which will provide economic and job development much greater than another coal plant would have done."

*KFTC member Tona Barkley, after EKPC abandoned plans for a new coal-burning power plant*

- o Saw the Public Service Commission open an investigation into the need for the Smith plant in direct response to our petition to the PSC last October.

To stop a coal-burning power plant in a coal state is a huge win, and we went one step further by convincing EKPC to agree to this collaboration.

In 2011, we'll pivot to the next phase: Renew East Kentucky, a plan to change the energy priority in the co-ops from coal to energy efficiency and renewable energy while creating thousands of jobs in a job-starved region. This five-year initiative will retool and expand the local workforce, build up local initiatives already in place, and more aggressively implement solutions to address the region's infrastructure and economic challenges.

# Winning Issues: Tax Reform/Economic Justice

Over the years, our message on tax reform has been consistent: Kentucky needs a revenue structure that distributes tax obligations fairly, adequately funds public services, and is sustainable over time.

Working with allies in the Kentucky Forward Coalition, we've developed the Kentucky Forward Bill, which calls for four changes: create a state Earned Income Tax Credit, apply a sales tax to a small number of services, ask Kentucky's wealthiest to pay their fair share of taxes, and re-establish the estate tax.

In January 2010, we held one of our most creative demonstrations of Kentucky's need for tax reform: a Bake Sale for the Budget. KFTC members went to Frankfort to raise money one cupcake at a time. Peddling Depression Cake made without milk or eggs, in the hallways and in legislators' offices, members talked about the need for real reform.



Lawmakers failed to pass a budget during the regular session and called a special session in May. On the first day, the Kentucky Forward Coalition held a rally on the capitol steps to ask legislators to stop cutting funding for education, mental health, and other essential services.



In 2011, we'll continue to raise awareness of budget issues and work to frame the discourse for the governor's race. And we'll continue participating in the national Tax Fairness Organizing Collaborative.

"Kentucky has been cutting for years. Look where that gets us. No new taxes, but tuition hikes every year for a decade. No new taxes, but public servants do much more with much less."

*Erik Lewis, Economic Justice Committee member*

# Winning Issues: Voting Rights for Former Felons

Kentucky is one of just two states that deny voting rights to all former felons unless they obtain a pardon from the governor. This disenfranchises 186,000 Kentuckians – one in seventeen of voting-age people in Kentucky, including one in four African Americans.

We're working for a constitutional amendment that would automatically restore voting rights to former felons once they've served their debt to society. Our bill has passed the House easily in the last several legislative sessions, but has stalled in the Senate because Senator Damon Thayer refuses to hear the bill in his committee. Much of our organizing in 2010 focused on pressuring Thayer through visits, calls, post cards and Facebook. Two new KFTC chapters formed in communities where folks came together around the Voting Rights



campaign, including one in Scott County, Thayer's home district.

We also welcomed new felon leaders into the campaign and raised awareness through high-energy Singing for Democracy events in several communities.



In 2011, we'll continue pushing for a constitutional amendment, help individual former felons get their voting rights restored through the pardon process, explore possible litigation strategies, and consider a campaign for a blanket pardon from the governor if our bill isn't passed in the session.



# Wrapping Up, Looking Ahead

We believe that Kentuckians For The Commonwealth is a special organization, built, sustained, and propelled forward by our diverse, committed base of grassroots members and leaders – our extraordinary, ordinary Kentuckians. We listen to each other, we learn from each other, we support each other, and we take action for justice together. We believe in our vision of a just and sustainable future and in the power of Kentuckians to achieve such a lofty ambition.



2010 was a year of turmoil and tension in our state and, for KFTC, a year of great progress. This year we strengthened our organization through the hard work of our members and chapters. We enjoyed important, incremental progress on key issues like stopping mountain-top removal and winning voting rights for all. And we celebrated unequivocal, transformational victory on others like halting the Smith power plant and paving the way for the Renew East Kentucky initiative. Perhaps most important, we lifted our prospects for the future through innovative work on strategic communications, voter empowerment, and New Power Leaders.

In 2011, KFTC will celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> birthday – a benchmark dreaded by some individuals but only to be admired and celebrated for a grassroots organization that has taken on some of the most daunting challenges facing our communities and state. As we go forward this year, we will reminisce and learn from those who have come before us, we will celebrate what we have accomplished together, and we will stride purposefully toward what we envision.

If you agree it's time for New Power, we invite you to join us.



# Stay in Touch

For more information about KFTC and some of the ally organizations mentioned in this booklet:

**Kentuckians For The Commonwealth:** [www.kftc.org](http://www.kftc.org)

**New Power Pledge:** [www.newpowerky.org](http://www.newpowerky.org)

**Appalachian Transition Initiative:** [www.appalachiantransition.net](http://www.appalachiantransition.net)

**Kentucky Sustainable Energy Alliance:** [www.kysea.org](http://www.kysea.org)

**Alliance for Appalachia:** [www.theallianceforappalachia.org](http://www.theallianceforappalachia.org)

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(f) 859-276-0774

### **Louisville Office**

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(f) 502-587-0054

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### **Whitesburg Office**

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**KENTUCKIANS FOR THE  
COMMONWEALTH**

*Action for Justice.*