

ALABAMA'S

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HEALTH

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State seat belt usage rate exceeds national average for first time

Observational surveys found that Alabama's safety belt usage rates in 2001 increased to the highest rate ever recorded in the state, and rates exceeded the national average for the first time ever. The estimated safety belt usage rate was 79 percent, an approximate 11 percent increase from the 2000 survey result of 71 percent.

Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer, said, "We are very pleased to see this landmark increase in seatbelt usage in Alabama. Factors possibly contributing to this improvement include the enactment of Alabama's primary seat belt law 1999, which made failure to wear safety belts a primary violation, and effective educational and enforcement efforts."

One successful effort was the "Click It or Ticket" campaign. Through this initiative, state, county and municipal law enforcement agencies conducted massive enforcement of the state's safety belt laws, with special emphasis on public safety checkpoints. This year the survey was conducted during a two-week period immediately following the campaign.

Safety belt restraint usage was observed for 40,000 drivers and front seat passengers within 15 selected Alabama counties. All counties, except for Montgomery with a 68 percent rate, improved from last year's safety belt usage rate. Jefferson County had an 86 percent seatbelt usage rate and Madison County's rate was 84 percent. Houston and Colbert counties each had an 80 percent seatbelt usage rate, the second and third highest rates of the surveyed counties. Etowah County's usage rate was 67 percent the lowest rate of the surveyed counties.

The survey determined that females' occupant restraint usage rate was 13.6 percent greater than the males'. The occupant restraint usage rate for Caucasians was 6.4 percent greater than the African Americans', and 32.9 percent greater

than the Hispanics'.

Safety belt usage rates for other counties surveyed for the year 2001 were as follows: Blount, 70 percent; Escambia, 76 percent; Lawrence, 77 percent; Lee, 74 percent; Marshall, 75 percent; Mobile, 69 percent; Shelby, 81 percent; Tuscaloosa, 77 percent; and Walker, 79 percent.

Epidemiologist Philip Jones of the Injury Prevention Division said, "I'm proud to see the citizens of Alabama have responded so well to the information they have received regarding seat belts and safety. I hope they continue to respond to the state's efforts to improve health by wearing seat belts."

The year 2001 marked the twelfth year that the required National Highway Traffic Safety Administration guidelines were followed for the surveillance procedures. In this scientifically drawn and conducted sample, data for all areas of the state from small town, to county, to urban roadways are included.

Fifteen counties actually compose the entire survey area, including the four metropolitan counties of Jefferson, Madison, Mobile and Montgomery. The other 11 counties were randomly selected from a pool of the 37 largest counties. A majority of Alabama residents are in the sample pool, because 85 percent of the state's population lies within these 37 counties.

Three hundred forty-five sites were selected and observed for one hour using the curbside lane as the reference position. At each site, surveillance was done to determine the number of people in the front seat of the vehicles and the number of these occupants wearing safety belts. The sites that were not surveyed during this period were surveyed over the next five months.

ADPH implements a new property inventory system

To have a more effective way of processing the way items are acquired, managed and disposed of, the Alabama Department of Public Health has devised a new system for property inventory this year. The new system not only allows the department to comply with Alabama law but also helps eliminate past problems associated with property inventory. It helps employees to more readily identify, locate and verify the existence of property.

Training classes were held to introduce the system to those who will be responsible for inventory and assigning property. The training classes not only included lectures about the system, but also included practice exercises and tests to help employees get hands-on experience of how the system works.

The system employs tools such as property tags and property history cards to help identify what type of property an item is and where it is currently located.

Green and blue tags help identify what kind of property an item may be. Reportable property, which is any item that is \$500 or more, has a lifetime use of at least one year and is subject to the state audit is identified by a blue tag. Green tags indicate that the item costs less than \$500 and is not subject to the state audit, but is still state property.

The property history card is a record of property ownership which requires anyone who uses state property to do their job to sign and assume responsibility for the item.



Ed Davidson was a course instructor.

Transfers and disposal of property will also be maintained on property history cards. Persons in control of the property at the time will be responsible for reporting if the property is lost, stolen or damaged. Employees may be held personally liable if they were grossly negligent while in control of the property.

“The only thing we are asking from people is that they do what a reasonably prudent person would do with the property they are in custody of. That’s the standard,” said Ed Davidson, public health administrative officer for the department.

Any problems unit property managers may encounter with property can be reported to the departmental property

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Alabama Department of Public Health

Mission

To serve the people of Alabama by assuring conditions in which they can be healthy.

Value Statement

The purpose of the Alabama Department of Public Health is to provide caring, high quality and professional services for the improvement and protection of the public’s health through disease prevention and the assurance of public health services to resident and transient populations of the state regardless of social circumstances or the ability to pay.

The Department of Public Health works closely with the community to preserve and protect the public’s health and to provide caring quality services.

ALABAMA’S HEALTH

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- Donald E. Williamson, M.D. State Health Officer
- Jim McVay, Dr. P.A. Director, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease
- Arrol Sheehan, M.A. Editor
- Takenya Stokes, J.D. Contributing Editor
- Toni Prater Graphic Designer
- Marion Wilford Photographer

Informational materials in alternative formats will be made available upon request..

Youth Tobacco Prevention and Control Mini-grant Program gets underway

The Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch has created a tobacco prevention education mini-grant program for youth-serving organizations in Alabama. Request for applications were distributed in December 2001 and applicants were reviewed and selected in February.

With \$360,000 funding from the Master Settlement Agreement between the states' attorney general and the tobacco companies, 17 grantees were awarded. The youth-serving organizations funded include local education agencies, Boys and Girls Clubs, and other nonprofit youth agencies.

Diane Beeson, director of the Tobacco Branch, states, "The tobacco branch is excited to add this component to our program. Most people begin using tobacco when they are teenagers and these grants will help to educate them to resist the lure of advertisements for tobacco and better understand how addictive nicotine can be. It is so hard to stop using tobacco once a person begins."

Each year in Alabama over 7,000 people die from smoking-related causes. It is expected that 85,000 Alabama children now under the age of 18 will die from smoking if this current trend continues. The 2000 Alabama Youth Tobacco Survey reported that 37.6 percent of high school students and 26.5 percent of middle school students are current tobacco users. Alabama is ranked above the national average for teenage tobacco use.

Barry Riddle, who is implementing the project in the tobacco branch, says, "Some of the grantees will begin this

summer with day camps, YMCA, and church programs while others will begin with the starting of the new school year. While the grantees plan for their announcement of the award, three of the grantees have conducted press conferences about the program coming to their community."

Increases to Alabama's smoking-caused Medicaid costs have nearly doubled in the past seven years from \$107.3 million in 1993 to \$209.3 in 2001, according to a recent report released by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Evidence from programs in California, Massachusetts, Maine and Florida has shown that tobacco prevention programs have resulted in fewer smokers and lower health costs for taxpayers. These states are saving up to three dollars for every dollar invested in effective prevention programs.

It is hoped that the program will grow and additional funding will soon become available. "We have sent out letters to organizations who expressed an interest in applying but did not send in an application. We have also contacted those applicants that have funding potential to revise their application. If we have applications on hand we can move quickly should we be notified this summer of more available funds," said Ms. Beeson.

For more information contact the Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease, (334) 206-2777.

By *BARRY RIDDLE*

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manager who will be able to further assist them.

"I maintain the central inventory database and will be able to help if you need to know where an item is or find its property number. In most cases when you have a problem that you can't handle you call me," said Geraldine Rose Daniels, departmental property manager.

The new system, piloted in October 2001, started on April 2 of this year and strives to make the 2002 audit this summer a successful one.

"This new system is going to require cooperation from everyone to make it successful," said Daniels.

By *TAKENYA STOKES*

Public health offices celebrate National Public Health Week 2002

The Alabama Department of Health celebrated National Public Health Week 2002 with a variety of activities. County health departments posted black-and-white and color fliers summarizing the 10 great public health achievements of the past century and thanking community partners who shared in making these achievements possible.

At the state level, a Montgomery television talk show featured a guest discussing the week. Mobile County's celebration was among many in the state sponsored by public health professionals.

"Annual public health awareness offers the community a closer look and better understanding of the scope of public health activities which are often overlooked," Dr. Bernard Eichold, Mobile County Health Officer, stated in a news release describing this annual event.

"It is an important time to address changing or emerging public health issues and evaluate how effectively we are dealing with health and environmental issues facing our community today. I encourage all citizens to join in a public health event and get to know the people and programs of public health."

Listed here are some of the county activities in observance of the week.

BUTLER

April 1-5 Employees distributed donated goods to patients. Items had been given by local merchants. Patients and staff enjoyed floral arrangements which had been donated by a local florist.

CALHOUN

The acting nursing supervisor provided snacks for staff in celebration of the week.

CLEBURNE

April 2, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Health Fair at Cleburne County Health Department. Activities included a variety of activities including a visit from McGruff the Crime Dog with free fingerprinting for children and safety information. The American Red Cross bloodmobile was on

hand for a blood drive. Information was available about family planning services, WIC, immunizations, tobacco use prevention, environmental information, ALL Kids insurance and other programs. Blood pressure checks were also given and refreshments served.



The Perry County Health Department in Marion offered a number of screenings and activities for the public in recognition of Public Health Day.

CONECUH

County health department employees were present as the Mayor signed a proclamation of Public Health Week, and a photograph was taken by the local newspaper. A generic news release from the Public Information Division was provided to be printed in the same weekly edition of the newspaper. Fliers were posted at the health department, medical doctors' offices and local hospital on National Public Health Week.

HALE

April 2, 3-5 p.m. Blood pressure checks, bone density tests, hemoglobin checks, tuberculosis skin tests, cholesterol checks, car seat checks by certified technician, with convertible child safety seats and booster seats given to and correctly installed for families who either had no seats or who were using improper seats for their children.

JEFFERSON

The Jefferson County Department of Health celebrated Public Health Week in a variety of ways. Throughout the week, banners proclaiming Public Health Week were displayed in each of its eight primary care health centers. A special edition of *SCOPE*, the Department's in-house newsletter, was delivered to each employee on the first day of the week. This special fun edition included a Word Scramble and Jumble featuring words commonly associated with public health, and baby photos of various employees. Employees were challenged to complete the puzzles and identify photographs. All correct entries were entered into a prize drawing held on the last day of Public Health Week.

In addition, sessions were held throughout the week to address key public health issues. Health officials, community leaders, the public and the media attended the

Public Health Week.....continued on page 5

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sessions.

April 1 - Opening Ceremony: Approximately 100 people gathered in the lobby of the Guy Tate building for the opening ceremony of Public Health Week. Jefferson County Health Officer, Michael E. Fleenor, M.D., welcomed the audience and recognized special guests: Dr. Max Michael, Dean of the UAB School of Public Health, and Dr. Adam Robertson, emergency room physician at HealthSouth and member of the Jefferson County Board of Health. Jefferson County Commission President Gary L. White read a proclamation recognizing Public Health Week in Jefferson County.

State Health Officer Donald Williamson, M.D., presented an update on Alabama's health. In particular, he cited the dangers of secondhand tobacco smoke and the need to restrict smoking in public places.

Dr. Fleenor presented the "State of Jefferson County's Health" in which he also noted the health risks posed by tobacco smoke. In addition, he reported on the leading causes of death in Jefferson County (heart disease, cancer and stroke), the health disparities between whites and minorities, and the need for improving minorities' access to health care.

Public health awards, which are presented yearly to individuals, organizations or businesses that have played significant roles during the previous year in protecting or improving the health of Jefferson County residents, were awarded. A reception followed.

April 1 - Hepatitis Update: Ian Williams, M.D., Hepatitis specialist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, provided latest information about Hepatitis A and C.

April 2 - Jefferson County's Emergency Response System Update: Wayne Studyvin, Senior Public Health Engineer, led a panel discussion about Jefferson County emergency preparedness and the anthrax events following the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center. Panel members included Alan Kannifer, Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency; Special Agent Dave Smith, Federal Bureau of Investigation; and A. J. Martin, Birmingham Fire and Rescue.

April 3 - West Nile Virus: Jim Mangum, Disease Control Intervention Supervisor; Thomas R. Unnasch, Ph.D., Professor of Geographical Research at University of Alabama at Birmingham; and Brian Debrow, Environmental Health Program Supervisor, gave an update on West Nile Virus in Jefferson County in 2001 and plans for addressing the virus during the 2002 mosquito season.

April 4 - Take Charge of Your Health, Jefferson County: JCDH Senior Nutrition Consultant Burgin Fowlkes introduced a panel of health and fitness experts to address problems associated with obesity and lack of exercise and to propose solutions. Panelists included Jack Hataway, MD, State of Alabama Department of Health; Jean Scott, Alabama Heart Association; Sandra Sims, Alabama State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; Curtis Starks, Senior Recreation and Fitness Specialist; and Victor Blackledge, Urban Planning, City of Birmingham.

April 5 - Winner of *SCOPE* contest announced. Eleven correct entries were received. An unbiased, blindfolded member of the Public Relations team drew the winning entry and the winner received a \$50 bill as her prize.

MARENGO

April 1, 2-4 p.m. Blood pressure checks, hemoglobin checks, checks for body fat content, tuberculosis skin tests, cholesterol checks, car seat checks by certified technician, with convertible child safety seats and booster seats given to and correctly installed for families who either had no seats or who were using improper seats for their children.

MOBILE

Recognition efforts have been expanded from National Public Health Week (April 1 - 7) to an entire month of awareness, providing more time to focus on the many services and programs provided by Mobile County's public health system.

April 5, 4 - 8 p.m. "Passport to a World of Good Health" Wellness Fair at local mall.

Health Department professionals were on hand to answer questions and distribute information about a variety of public health programs. Mall goers "traveled" health department booths and had health passports validated to enter a drawing. Passport to a World of Good Health Sites were as follows: SAFE KIDS featuring kid fingerprinting with "McGruff Crimestopper," Nutrition Services and WIC, HIV/AIDS and STD Control, Alabama Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program, Mosquito and Rodent Control, Lead Poison Prevention, Foodhandler Information, Women's Center featuring Family Planning and Maternity Services, TEEN Center, Children's Medical Services and Immunization Information, Tobacco Prevention and Control, Home Health Services, free blood

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Public Health Week.....continued from page 5

pressure checks, ALL Kids health insurance sign-up, MCHD's mascots.

April 19, 11:30 a.m. MCHD Employee Wellness Walk 2002. Employees laced up their walking shoes and hit the trail for their annual employee wellness walk departing the main Health Department, 251 North Bayou, to Bienville Square at 11:30 a.m. Dr. Eichold read Public Health Month proclamation at noon in the Square and thanked staff for their contributions in improving the public's health. Walk serves as a warm-up for the MCHD March of Dimes Walk Team which participated in MOD Walk America on April 20.

MONROE

April 3, 9 a.m. to 12 noon Health fair included free blood pressure, osteoporosis, cholesterol and glucose screenings. Also, information booths were set up providing information on the various health department services. For the children there was a "Fishing For Health" fishing booth (sponsored by the ALL Kids representative and the dental health educator) and a puppet show from the "KIDS CLUB" Nutrition Education Program was performed. The WIC booth featured Nancy Johnson, Area WIC Coordinator wearing the "FAT VEST" (which demonstrated how 20 pounds of extra fat feels), the Body Fat Calculating Machine, folic acid and WIC information. Approximately 55 people attended the health fair and 46 of those participated in the screenings.

PERRY

April 4, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. Blood pressure checks, bone density tests, checks for body fat content, hemoglobin checks, tuberculosis skin tests, blood sugar checks, cholesterol checks, car seat checks by certified technician, with convertible child safety seats and booster seats given to and correctly installed for families who either had no seats or who were using improper seats for their children. One hundred persons attended.

RANDOLPH

April 5 Local newspaper and radio advertisements promoted an open immunization day during which no appointments were needed.

ST. CLAIR

April 4, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Produced a flier outlining the many programs offered, including a Medication Assistance Program. A newspaper article titled "Health fair shows off

programs," featured staff interviews which included promotion of upcoming events such as a youth abstinence rally and a week of free immunizations. Ten local businesses made donations such as flowers and balloons for the occasion. Candies were offered for children in the Community Room. Approximately 30-40 persons attended.

SUMTER

April 3, 3 - 5 p.m. Blood pressure checks, bone density tests, checks for body fat content, hemoglobin checks, tuberculosis skin tests, cholesterol checks, car seat checks by certified technician, with convertible child safety seats and booster seats given to and correctly installed for families who either had no seats or who were using improper seats for their children.

Winning posters, essays promote seat belt usage among youth

The Injury Prevention Division of the Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease announces the winners in its Buckle-Up, Alabama! Traffic Safety Poster Contest for 2002, an event designed to promote consistent seat belt usage among elementary school children. Posters will be published in an activity book distributed as a complement to Buckle-Up America Week, which is observed nationally in May.

The contest consists of two levels. Each school held its own contest, selecting first place winners for each grade level from kindergarten through grade six. Then winning posters were sent to the state level for judging.

First and second place state-level winners were selected, with first place winners receiving \$100 U.S. Savings Bonds and second place winners receiving \$50 bonds. Students receiving honorable mentions had their posters included in the activity book.

Poster contest winners are as follows:

Kindergarten

- First:** Payton Hill, John S. Jones Elementary School, Rainbow City
- Second:** Clay Hooper, Fairview Elementary School, Cullman
- Honorable Mention:* Amanda Joy Ingram, Andalusia Elementary School, Andalusia
 Makenna Smith, West Point Elementary School, Cullman

First Grade

- First:** Nikki Fossett, Guntersville Elementary School, Guntersville
- Second:** Eboni Nash, Abrams Elementary School, Bessemer
- Honorable Mention:* Courtney McGlaughn, John S. Jones Elementary School, Rainbow City

Second Grade

- First:** Ley Anne Murphy, Cahawba

Second:

Honorable Mention:

- Christian Academy, Centreville
 Jack Steele, Monroe Academy, Monroeville
- Katelyn Bradford, Glen Oaks Elementary School, Fairfield
 Megan Smith, Barkley Bridge Elementary School, Hartselle

Third Grade

- First:** Abby McHugh, Crestline Elementary School, Hartselle
- Second:** Tera Hooper, Fairview Elementary School, Cullman
- Honorable Mention:* Everette Bennett Jr., ABC Elementary, Alberta

- Ashtyne Cole, Trinity Presbyterian School, Montgomery
 Anna Williams, John S. Jones Elementary School, Rainbow City

Fourth Grade

- First:** Heather Cline, John S. Jones Elementary School, Rainbow City
- Second:** Josh Andrews, Thomasville Elementary School, Thomasville
- Honorable Mention:* Anna Laura Edmonds, Marengo Academy, Linden

- Porchia LaShawn Holden, Madison County Elementary School, Gurley
 Corey Quick, Fairview Elementary School, Cullman

Fifth Grade

- First:** Lauren Dahlke, Fairview Elementary School, Cullman
- Second:** Tiffany Webb, Pinson Elementary School, Pinson
- Honorable Mention:* Laura Leigh Scott, Alabama Christian Academy, Montgomery

- Ryan Whitmore, Challenger Elementary School, Huntsville

Winners.....See page 8

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Sixth Grade:

- First: Andy Thigpen, Shoals Christian School, Florence
- Second: Kyle Stephens, Marengo Academy, Linden
- Honorable Mention:* Zachary Buch, Alabama Christian Academy, Montgomery
Dallas Thomas, Alabama Christian Academy, Montgomery

The department also announces the winners in its Buckle-Up, Alabama! Traffic Safety Essay Competition for 2002. This is a contest designed to promote consistent seat belt usage among middle and high school students.

The contest consists of two levels. Each school held its own contest, selecting first place winners for each grade level from seventh through ninth grades. Then winning essays were sent to the state level for judging.

First and second place state-level winners were chosen, with first place winners receiving \$100 U.S. Savings Bonds and second place winners receiving \$50 bonds.

Essay contest winners are as follows:

Seventh Grade

- First: Sawyer Denney, Tuscaloosa Academy, Tuscaloosa
- Second: Keyon Hicks, Admiral Moorer Middle School, Eufaula

Eighth Grade

- First: Sarah Green, Monroe Academy, Monroeville, Ala.
- Second: Tracey Hinton, John T. Morgan Academy, Selma

Ninth Grade

- First: Jennifer Merry, Bradshaw High School, Florence
- Second: Wes Davis, Southern Academy, Greensboro

Honorable mentions were given to Laura Braddick, Bradshaw High School, Florence; and Alex Parker, John T. Morgan Academy, Selma.

Awards for both competitions are provided by several businesses and organizations committed to the safety of Alabama's children. These include the Alabama Department of Transportation, Alabama Head Injury Foundation, Alabama SAFE KIDS Coalition, ALFA

Insurance and Winn Dixie Supermarkets.

These activities are conducted in coordination with the Law Enforcement and Traffic Safety Division of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs. For information about seat belt safety, please contact Lynn B. Williams, (334) 206-5539 or 1-800-252-1818, e-mail lwilliams@adph.state.al.us.

Injury News

Published By

The Alabama Department of Public Health
Injury Prevention Division
Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease
Carol F. Mysinger, M.Ed., M.P.A.....Director
Lynn B. Williams, M.A.....Editor

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Eliminating soft drinks could help prevent childhood obesity

A recent medical study has found that soft drinks can be a contributing factor of obesity among school-age children. The study, conducted in Massachusetts, involved children with an average age of 11.7 and found that increased soft drink consumption was clearly linked to increased weight gain.

In the past 20 years weight gain has become a major issue in the United States with a 200 percent increase in obesity in adults and 300 percent increase of obesity in children. Obesity can lead to serious health problems such as heart disease, hypertension, several types of cancer and type 2 diabetes. Former Surgeon General David Satcher stated that in the future obesity may well become more important than smoking and alcohol use as a cause of death and disease in the United States.

Because persistent obesity usually begins in childhood, prevention will have to involve the parents as well as the community.

“The most important information about obesity is that it is preventable. To achieve that goal we must convince society that obesity is much more of a health problem than it is an appearance problem,” states Dr. David Reynolds of the Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

One of the simplest ways of preventing obesity is to decrease the consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks by children. Parents should set strict limits on the number of

soft drinks consumed by children in the home and schools should substitute healthier drinks in their vending machines.

“Selling soft drinks at school legitimizes their use by students,” states Dr. Reynolds.

More soft drink consumption could be the cause of the dramatic decrease in milk consumption by the average student during the past 20 years. Low-fat milk consumption is an important part of a healthy diet throughout one’s life.

“Parents and schools should make sure that their children have better choices of what to drink such as milk, juice and water. Not only are these not going to contribute to obesity, but they are also healthful to the body,” states Miriam Gaines, director of the Nutrition and Physical Activity Unit of the Alabama Department of Public Health.

The only exception to this healthy regimen would be providing sports drinks to high school athletes during games or intense practices because they perspire enough to warrant salt replacement.

For more information please contact the Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics at 205-979-2750, and the Alabama Department of Public Health’s Web site at www.adph.org.

By TAKENYA STOKES



An essay contest, oral health screenings and dental health education at area schools were among the projects of the Monroe County Health Department during National Children’s Dental Health Month in February. Dental Health Coordinator Gerrie McMillian said projects were sponsored by area dentists and the Monroe County Health Department. Children pictured are at the Monroeville Headstart Center. The puppet shown was purchased for dental education by WIC.

Commendations

Health department employees who are listed here have received letters of commendation recently. To recognize other employees, please send letters through your supervisors or the state health officer to Alabama's Health.

Cynthia Abner
Sandra Blakely
Paige Barnhill

Health Promotion and Chronic Disease
from Shirley Henley
Montgomery, Ala.

Jamie Brown
Hazel Davis
Amelia Flowers
Jean Gibbs
Gwen Harris

Carlisha Lane
Arthur Lawson
Shelia Martin
Center for Health Statistics

from Katherine Cole
Hattiesburg, Miss.

Rick Harris
Health Provider Standards

from John Giles
Montgomery, Ala.
Frank D. Holden
Montgomery, Ala.

John Heitman, M.S.
Computer Systems Center

from Sharon M. Whalen
Montgomery, Ala.

Evelyn Jackson
Center for Health Statistics

from Betty Jean Young
Kerrville, Texas

Lauderdale County Health Department

from Shirl Harwell
Killen, Ala.

Michael Welch
Health Provider Standards

from Camille Bowman
Montgomery, Ala.

Retirees

Retiring from the Alabama Department of Public Health effective April 1 were the following employees:

Wilma Burkett - HIV/AIDS Division
Carolyn Davenport - Calhoun County Health Department
Carole Fields - Tallapoosa County Health Department
Trudy Rainwater - Marshall County Health Department
Fay Smith - Office of Professional and Support Services



Marie F. Carastro, M.S., R.D., L.D., of the Bureau of Health Provider Services was recognized recently for her 50 years' membership in the American Dietetic Association and the Alabama Dietetic Association. Ms. Carastro has been employed with the department for the past 13 years and is a surveyor of health care facilities.

Phi Lambda Sigma presents two special awards to Charles Thomas

Phi Lambda Sigma, a Pharmacy Leadership Society based in Kansas City, Mo., recently honored Charles Thomas, director of the Pharmacy Unit, Office of Professional and Support Services, with two special awards. The national society has 70 chapters at universities across the U.S.

Thomas received a newly created, one-time Phi Lambda Sigma Founder's Award as a lasting recognition to his vision and dedication to leadership in the profession of pharmacy. The Founder's Award was presented March 16 during the Phi Lambda Sigma awards reception in Philadelphia, Pa.

In the society's printed program, Thomas was recognized for his "creative imagination" in founding the society in 1965 when he was then a student at Auburn University School of Pharmacy. The Alpha chapter was chartered at Auburn under his leadership, and the society, which is rich in leadership diversity, continues to grow with three chapters chartered in 2002.

Additionally, the executive committee has renamed its Leadership Challenge Award as the "Charles Thomas Leadership Challenge." The Leadership Challenge Award, established in 1994, is presented annually at the Phi Lambda Sigma House of Delegates.

In a letter announcing these two awards, Mary L. Eular, Pharm.D., executive director of the society, stated, "We are happy to have this opportunity to recognize you for your dream, which is Phi Lambda Sigma today."

Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer, credited Thomas for his accomplishments which include "making significant improvements in pharmacy-related policies and procedures for local health department staff and establishing critical procedures and pharmacist networks for pharmacy-related aspects of Alabama's bioterrorism preparedness and response plan."

A graduate of Auburn University School of Pharmacy, Thomas has held an Alabama pharmacy license since 1965 and has been a preceptor since 1986. He is past president of the Alabama Pharmacy Association and the Alabama State Board of Pharmacy. He has been employed by the department since January 1996 and is a scholar of the South Central Public Health Leadership Institute.



Charlie Thomas founded the society 37 years ago, and has been an active leader through the years.



May is Better Hearing and Speech Month, Bike Safety Month, National High Blood Pressure Month, National Sight Saving Month, National Trauma Awareness Month, Older Americans Month and Stroke Awareness Month.

Calendar of Events



May 8

Current Reproductive Health Issues for Nurses, Public Health Staff Development, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Annie Vosel, (334) 206-2959.



May 15

Partnering with Home Care to Promote Oral Health, Home Health Aide and Home Attendant Continuing Education, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Brenda Elliott, (334) 347-2664, extension 402.



May 16

The Medical Aspects of Child Abuse, 9 a.m.-12 noon. For more information contact Lucia Grantham, (334) 670-3367.

May 17

National Employee Health and Fitness Day



June 5

United We Stand: Public Health in the 21st Century, 12:15-1:15 p.m.; Bioterrorism Response: A Challenge to Public Health, 20th National Conference on Health Education and Health Promotion, 1:30-2:30 p.m. For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.

June 5-7

ASTDHPHE Annual Meeting. For more information contact Jim McVay, Dr.P.A., (334) 206-5600.



June 12

Pharmacology Update for Women's Health Care, 2-4 p.m., Public Health Staff Development. For more information contact Debbie Thomasson, (334) 206-5655.



June 19

HIV/AIDS Pre- and Post-Test Data Collection and Counseling Guidelines, 8:30-10:30 a.m. For more information contact Brenda Cummings, (334) 206-5364.



July 10

Partnering with the Community, 2-4 p.m., Public Health Staff Development. For more information contact Debbie Thomasson, (334) 206-5655.



July 11

ADPH Statewide Staff Meeting. For more information contact Jim McVay, Dr.P.A., (334) 206-5600.