

# ALABAMA'S

A PUBLICATION OF THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

# HEALTH

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## Public health employees make good use of Heimlich, CPR

**T**he first aid skills acquired in a U.S. Marine Corps boot camp six years ago greatly benefited a co-worker when Clay Weeks performed the Heimlich maneuver on Tamika Harris of the Center for Health Statistics one April morning.

Ms. Harris said she began choking after swallowing a peppermint the wrong way. "My airway was blocked and they said I was turning red." Two other colleagues had tried unsuccessfully to help her spit up the mint and had attempted the maneuver without success. A co-worker called 911 and others were calling out for help when Computer Systems Center employee Weeks stepped forward. The co-workers led him to a cubicle where Ms. Harris was



Clay Weeks is shown with Tamika Harris.

attempting to breathe.

"Relax," he told her. "I am going to help you out." He performed the Heimlich maneuver and was able to get her to take a breath, and when the paramedics arrived she was drinking a glass of water. Weeks had never used the skill before.

Other employees have been called upon to use their first aid skills recently. *Donna Pierce*, a nurse with Public Health Area 8 Home Care Services, who serves as the educator for that program, performed cardiopulmonary

resuscitation on a middle-aged woman at her church. The woman, who was attending Sunday morning services was revived and is doing fine now.

Nurse *Ada Wall*, also of the Autauga County Health Department, attempted CPR on an elderly and very sick home health patient who subsequently died at home.

For information about CPR/First Aid classes being offered, you may contact Michele Jones, Training Coordinator, at 334-206-5665. The classes are offered in the RSA Tower and the state Bureau of Clinical Laboratories on a quarterly basis as space is available.

## Mobile dental van enhances dental services

**B**irmingham dentist Dr. Mark Buckner fulfilled a dream recently with the purchase of his own fully equipped, two-chair mobile dental van. And in so doing, he volunteered his van for collaborative projects with the Alabama Department of Public Health and the UAB School of Dentistry.

The first venture, during National Dental Health Month, joined ADPH and the Tuscaloosa District Dental Society for the national "Give Kids a Smile" campaign of the American Dental Association. As part of the project, the van rolled onto the Holt Elementary School campus in Tuscaloosa twice. Each child received a dental screening in the van, children with urgent treatment needs were identified, then volunteer dentists in the community

*Dental.....continued on page 2*

# Dental.....continued from page 1

returned to the van a few weeks later to restore the teeth of those children in need. It was a unique experience in dental care for children and dentists.

“Through Dr. Buckner’s generosity, the mobile van, on school property, is an ideal way to assure needed dental care to children in areas where transportation or other factors limit access to dental care. We hope to work with Dr. Buckner on other projects in the future,” said Dr. Stuart A. Lockwood, State Dental director, Bureau of Family Health Services.

Presently, as part of a faith-based initiative, the van is being used for dental screenings in Black Belt counties.

Many areas in Alabama have poor access to dental care for children and adults. Over the past two years

ADPH and the University of Alabama School of Dentistry

staff have performed dental screenings, with tongue blades and pen flashlights, to assess oral health status of over 10,000 children,” said Dr. Lockwood, “We have screened the entire K-12 student populations of Escambia, Lowndes, Conecuh and Monroe counties, linking children with tooth decay to dentists or dental clinics nearby. Each child receives a toothbrush and a small tube of toothpaste after the screening.”

Public Health Area 9 nurse, Gerrie McMillan, has coordinated the dental screenings and follow-up, and with Sherry Goode, Oral Health Branch, has prepared each school site for screening. Last year, as part of a federal grant, second grade students in Escambia County were evaluated for dental sealants; dental school students and residents later placed sealants for about 250 students. As students/residents are available, more sealant placement is anticipated.



Pictured are Dr. Aymee Anderson, Tuscaloosa County Health Department, and her husband, Dr. David Anderson, treating a Holt Elementary School child in the van.



The screening team members shown are Dr. Stuart Lockwood, State Dental director; Holt School nurse Cindy O’Quinn; Gerrie McMillan, R.N., dental health coordinator, Public Health Area 9; Dr. Walt Williams, Tuscaloosa; Sherry Goode, dental education consultant; and Dr. Mark Buckner, Birmingham.

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

# Alabama's Radon Control Program receives national recognition

The Alabama Radon Control Program of the Office of Radiation Control was selected one of two finalists in the nation for the Environmental Protection Agency/National Environmental Health Association Individual Achievement Award for Radon Risk Reduction.

The award was presented for real estate outreach efforts, the most significant and innovative part of which are the "Radon-Ready" yard signs placed by builders in front of houses built using Radon Resistant New Construction Techniques which are described in the model residential building code. The use of radon control methods in construction is voluntary in most of Alabama.

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer. Radon enters the home from the soil below and occurs in hazardous concentrations in many homes, mainly in northern parts of the state.

By installing a radon escape stack from the soil below the slab to the open air above their new houses, contractors are helping to reduce future lung cancer rates in high radon counties. If the radon escape stack is installed during construction it is far less costly than having to put one in after the home is finished in response to high radon levels.

Kirk Whatley, radiation control director, said, "This recognition is reflective of the work, dedication and innovative ideas of Jim McNeese towards reducing the levels of radon (the second leading cause of lung cancer) in homes and other buildings in Alabama."

McNeese, assistant director, said, "Despite the slow progress in having Radon Resistant New Construction Techniques required, we are making considerable progress with voluntary use of these techniques. Believing that radon testing in real estate transactions and building new houses, RRNC are keys to effective radon risk reduction, Alabama is placing major emphasis in these key areas. We have found that there is a widespread radon problem in the Tennessee Valley."

Whatley and McNeese also credited the department's partner agency, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, for its work in this joint effort, especially Susan Roberts and Sabrina Lyle who designed the signs.



Jim McNeese of the Office of Radiation Control was selected as a finalist for the Individual Achievement Award for Radon Risk Reduction. The award was presented in recognition of innovative work and commitment to the national radon risk reduction effort.

# Richard Burleson inducted into Delta Omega

ADPH employee Richard Burleson was inducted into the Upsilon Chapter of Delta Omega, the national honorary society for graduate studies in public health, at the UAB School of Public Health graduation luncheon in Birmingham on May 6, 2005.

Burleson, a Birmingham native who now lives in the Holtville/Slapout area, has been with the department for more than 10 years and is currently the assistant director of the Alabama Child Death Review System in the Bureau of Family Health Services. He received a Bachelor of Science degree from UAB in 1994, a Master of Business Administration degree from AUM in 1999, and a Master of Public Health degree from the UAB SOPH in 2002.

To date, UAB SOPH's Upsilon Chapter has inducted about 200 students, 17 faculty members, and 11 alumni

into Delta Omega. Richard became the 11th alumnus inducted because of his academic and professional work in public health and his continuing involvement with the SOPH.



Richard Burleson

# Alabama Arthritis Control Program recognized for exemplary evaluation efforts

The Alabama Arthritis Control Program's evaluation efforts to address the process, effectiveness, impact and outcome of all components of the Alabama Arthritis Control Plan were recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at the national grantees meeting April 22 in Atlanta.

Joe Sniezek, M.D., M.P.H., Chief, Arthritis Program, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, said in presenting the award, "Alabama eagerly and effectively piloted the use of the CDD Arthritis Impact tools, and continues to use the tools to monitor the reach and effectiveness of PACE (People with Arthritis Can Exercise) and ASHC (Arthritis Self Help Course). Evaluating reach continues to challenge most state arthritis programs, but Alabama is an exemplary leader in this arena."

One of the tools is a Course/Class Participation Reporting Form that tracks both the number of courses or class series held, and participation levels in the ASHC and PACE programs. An important aspect of assuring quality and trustworthiness of intervention implementation is determining if state health department program outcomes are similar to the outcomes achieved in the original studies of ASHC and PACE.

This involves baseline and follow-up data at the conclusion of the intervention program, by using a pre-test and post-test. The Chronic Disease Directors Arthritis Council recommended that state health departments use the same core set of questions on the pre-/post-test to monitor the health outcomes of these evidence-based interventions. These results become the local data to demonstrate the importance of the benefit of these evidence-based community arthritis programs.

In 2005, the Alabama Arthritis Control Program



Shown, left to right, are Alabama Department of Public Health employees who helped Alabama's arthritis program achieve national recognition: Judy Woods, Sondra Reese, Leslie Lowe, Dr. Siegfried Harden, Linda Austin, Dr. Kathryn Chapman and Virginia Jackson.

evaluation revealed a significant increase in the number of ASHC and PACE leaders, classes, and participants since 1999. Linda Austin directs the Arthritis Branch within the Chronic Disease Prevention Division, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease.

Sniezek added during his presentation, "Linda Austin has been a pioneer in expanding and evaluating evidence-based interventions through highly effective partnership-building. She is an outstanding program manager, and a real friend of the CDC Arthritis Program and other state-based arthritis programs."

CDC project officers determined the 2005 award recipients.

## Retirements

The following persons have retired from the Alabama Department of Public Health recently:

April 1 -

**Saundra Smith** - Talladega County Health Department

May 1 -

**Linda Crim** - Blount County Health Department

**Shelby Lawson** - Walker County Health Department

**Sherin Martin** - Bureau of Health Provider Standards

# County health departments celebrate Public Health Week

National Public Health Week 2005 was celebrated in several county health departments with a variety of activities. Peggy Blakeney, assistant area administrator for Houston County Health Department, summarized the week by stating, "We had fun 'Empowering the citizens of our community to live stronger longer.' The week was a fun week for the staff and the public. I am especially proud of our staff, who, in spite of their heavy workload, planned these activities and did the leg work to make this year's NPHW a success."

Some of the events in observance of the week are as follows:

## HOUSTON COUNTY

*April 4* - Blood Drive, LifeSouth mobile unit was in health department parking lot all day. As a result, "we helped save 66 lives."

*April 5* - Address to the Dothan City Commission by Ms. Blakeney with proclamation by Mayor Chester Sowell of Dothan. Michael Ramsey, M.D., from Dothan Pediatrics conducted educational classes for mothers of newborns and soon-to-be moms. Educational class was held for parents of small children, "Safety Proof Your Home," and educational classes on oral health were conducted by health department social workers. Approximately 200 oral health care bags containing toothbrushes, dental floss, toothpaste and more were given to participants. Donations of oral health care supplies were provided.

*April 6* - Women's Health Class for Spanish-speaking women was conducted by Olga Norton, interpreter, and health department nurses. Printed material in Spanish given to all participants. Those who took part agreed these were "Great Classes!"



*April 7* - Diabetes Education Prevention classes were conducted by Barbara Bain, Certified Diabetes Educator, and Catherine Person, Wellness Nurse. Nutritious sugar-free snacks were provided by local partners.

*April 8* - Kids Day - Festive decorations were displayed throughout the health department with fun activities provided for the kids all day. The City of Dothan Fire Department brought its fire truck and firehouse to teach children fire safety. Third grade health posters were judged, winners announced and prizes awarded.



"This list just touches the surface," Ms. Blakeney said. "There were so many activities that I can't list them all. Again, we had a tremendous amount of local support from community partners who provided great door prizes, gifts, and food for all of our activities."

## JEFFERSON COUNTY

*April 4* Opening Ceremony

State and county health addresses were given by Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer, and Dr. Michael Fleenor, area and county health officer. Awards were presented to individuals and agencies that partnered with the Jefferson



County Department of Health to improve public health. Employee Special Awards were presented, the Jefferson County Commission presented a proclamation for Public Health Week, and the City of Birmingham issued a resolution for public health. The Jefferson County Department of Health declared all campuses totally smoke-free. This was done in conjunction with the City of Birmingham's passing a smoking ban on city restaurants.

The Jefferson County Department of Health also mandated 100 percent healthy food items in all vending machines. JCDH is taking a lead role in preventing health disparities by encouraging healthier eating for its employees, patients, and clients.

*Public Health Week.....continued on page 6*

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

## April 5 - Lunch 'N Learn Sessions (Smoking Cessation)

Employees were invited to attend this session and learn of various smoking cessation methods.

## April 6 - Lunch 'N Learn Session (The Dangers of Secondhand Smoke)

Employees were invited to attend this session to learn the effects of environmental smoke on non-smokers.

## April 7, 8 - Departmental Employee Recognition Ceremonies



Houston County sponsored a poster contest.

Each department was responsible for coordinating its Employee Recognition Ceremony to include the distribution of service pins and special awards.

## April 8 - Community Volunteer Recognition Ceremony

Awards were presented to community leaders and volunteers that made extraordinary contributions to public health.

## PERRY COUNTY

There was a diabetic walk in Perry County in which individuals walked for diabetes. Thirty-eight people who were diabetic or had a family member that was diabetic participated, along with eight other people who registered the participants and provided refreshments. This started at 7 a.m. on the Georgia Walker Walking Trail.

Kickoff of the 100-mile Old Howard Bike Ride from Marion Military Institute was held. The bikers had several routes from which to choose. They could ride 30, 50, 70 or 100-mile routes. There were 144 participants in the bike ride with 50-plus watching as they started their journey across Perry County. The bikers came from all across Alabama. William Matthews from Samford University started the ride with an antique bike of the type popular at the time

the university was located in Marion.

Marion-Perry Nutrition and Fitness Center was opened with Samford students to instruct on how to use the equipment and provide activity for the teenagers. Twenty participants, six students and one faculty instructor were present.

A health fair was conducted at the Perry County Health Department with more than 120 people screened and others who attended to receive information and counseling. The participants had the following tests done: blood sugar, hemoglobin, sickle cell, cholesterol, blood pressure, HIV, bone density, vision screening, dental screening, BMI, body fat, step testing and body measurements.

Information was available and representatives from ALL Kids, Alabama Tombigbee Senior RX Program, Project Export Tuskegee, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Alabama Department of Public Health, Alabama Early Detection Program, U.S. Rep. Artur Davis, and Governor's BBA Commission represented by Dr. Mickey Trimm. Several physicians from Montgomery, Birmingham, Selma and Eutaw were available.

Fun Fest was held on Marion Military Institute Parade Field with more than 100 children playing on Noah's Ark and other inflatables. There were games and a live band playing music. Hot dogs, hamburgers, cookies and drinks were available for the parents and children. This was a quality time with positive family interaction. There were both parents and grandparents watching the children play the games and enjoy the music. Sponsors included Sowing Seeds of Hope, Perry County Health Department, Samford University, Elite Federated Club, Match Program, Governor's Black Belt Action Commission, Congressman Artur Davis and Community Care Network.

## SUMTER COUNTY

Annual Public Health Day was celebrated with this year's theme "Empowering Americans to Live Stronger, Longer" and which encouraged promoting the "3 Ps" in adding more healthy years to life: Prevent, Protect and Plan. The public was invited to the health department for the following services at no charge: blood pressure checks, blood sugar checks, cholesterol checks, hemoglobin checks, bone density checks, HIV tests and others. Services provided by the department were also exhibited including displays by ALL Kids and Sumter County Extension office.

On April 9, Annual Public Health Day was celebrated  
*Public Health Week.....continued on page 7*

# In memory of Gretta McCoy

The Bureau of Home and Community Services was saddened to announce the death of Gretta McCoy on April 2.

According to her supervisor Carol Adair, Mrs. McCoy “was always helping everyone with everything—from equipment to anything else.” Ever pleasant, Ms. Adair said, “Gretta wore a smile and had a gift of getting along with all different types of people. She lit up the room.”

At her retirement party, Carol Heier produced the scrapbook of Bureau of Home and Community Services’ memories, pictures and words of love/courage/strength from all the people with whom Gretta worked and their family members.

At the celebration Gretta was presented and crowned by Jackie Giddens as the “Queen Bee.”

Numerous guests and retirees from the Health Department and other state agencies were present at the retirement party. Entertainment activity was created by Mary Ann Armstrong and Barbara Davis sang and danced to the song “Respect.” Bureau Director Grover Wedgeworth presented a plaque from Dr. Williamson and Gov. Bob Riley.

Ms. Grier said, “She was a loving and kind person to everyone—a sunshine to all of our hearts.”

An accounts payable clerk, Ms. McCoy worked in the Division of Budget and Personnel for the bureau. She had worked with the department since April 1996 and was

first employed with the state in March 1989. In May 2004 she was awarded a B.S. degree in Management Communications from Southern Christian University.

Survivors include a daughter, Teumbay Lavasia Barnes; and a son, Bryant Samario Barnes; of Prattville.



Gretta McCoy is seated at center.

## Public Health Week.....continued from page 6

with this year’s theme “Empowering Americans to Live Stronger, Longer and which encouraged “Promoting the three Ps in adding more healthy years to live: Prevent, Protect and Plan.”

### TALLADEGA COUNTY

The Talladega County Health Department in Sylacauga celebrated National Public Health Week by informing the community, especially aging adults, on how to lead a healthier lifestyle. In an article announcing the week in the *Daily Home*, Renee Jacobs was quoted as saying, “We’re keying in this year on encouraging healthy aging for people over 65 because they often don’t go the doctor as often as needed. We want to inform them on having a healthy lifestyle, like getting shots, immunizations, keeping up on regular visits and basically keep them aware of what we offer here.”

Although Americans are living longer, many aging adults continue to suffer from preventable health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease, according to the American Public Health Association.

The average life expectancy of Americans rose slightly, however, older citizens continue to suffer from chronic diseases that can be treated, if they are detected in time. One in three older Americans does not get all

recommended screenings.

The department invited the community to visit Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Visitors were offered refreshments and staff provided free blood pressure checks and weight checks until noon. The department no longer offers the hypertension program, but appropriate referrals were made for anyone with high blood pressure. To help educate the public, representatives from the Breast and Cervical Cancer program were on hand Thursday to answer questions along with staff members to assist with questions regarding ALLKids insurance for children under age 19. Community members were also invited to drop by throughout the week to register for door prizes donated from local businesses. Prizes were awarded April 11.



## Regional Injury Prevention Safety Fair hits a home run

A Regional Injury Prevention Safety Fair was held on April 18 at the Montgomery Biscuits Baseball Stadium. Over 850 fourth graders, teachers and parents from 14 schools in Autauga, Elmore, Lowndes, Montgomery and the city of Tallassee participated in the event hosted by the Injury Advisory Council which is led by the Alabama Department of Public Health's Injury Prevention Division.

Children were greeted by the mascot Big Mo as they arrived at the stadium. Other mascots, the State Farm Good Neigh Bear and the Montgomery Zoo Zoobedo, were also in attendance throughout the day to talk to the children and take pictures with them in between hearing presentations from over 30 exhibitors. Each exhibitor gave a presentation or had an activity on a specific safety or injury prevention topic. The students learned about ATV safety, bicycle safety, fire prevention, bus safety, poison safety, sun safety, youth violence, bullying, self-esteem, expressing emotions, weather safety, pet safety, motor vehicle safety, lead poisoning prevention and water safety.

Students were treated to hot dogs at lunchtime along with a puppet show by the Alabama Poison Center.

The Injury Advisory Council composed of over 30 state agencies, public and private organizations helped make this event possible. Each member is committed to reducing injury in Alabama and by participating in the



Safety Fair has contributed to getting the word out to the public and children who are at greatest risk of injury.

Injury is the leading cause of death in children ages 1-18. This fair was an avenue to teach children how they can protect themselves starting at an early age and to change their behaviors in order to be safe.

Teachers, parents, students and exhibitors alike proclaimed the Safety Fair a success and hope to see it again in the future. If you are interested in hosting a Safety Fair in your area next year, please contact Melissa Khan at 334-206-5541 or via email at [molmstead@adph.state.al.us](mailto:molmstead@adph.state.al.us) for more information.

By *MELISSA KHAN, MPH*



### Injury News

Published By

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# Thomas receives national pharmacy award

Charles Thomas, director of the Pharmacy Unit, Office of Professional and Support Services, has been named recipient of the Linwood F. Tice Friend of the Academy of Students of Pharmacy Award. The American Pharmacists Association (APhA) is the national professional society of pharmacists.

Thomas was selected for the award in recognition of “his strong legacy of student pharmacist leadership,” including his role as the founder of Phi Lambda Sigma, the National Pharmacy Leadership Society, as a student in 1965. The printed program of the American Pharmacist Association further stated, “His quiet, yet forceful advocacy resulted in recognition for contributions to the profession of pharmacy. It has been said Thomas has left a legacy within the profession of pharmacy that provides a means to influence the lives of many students throughout the course of their careers. He continues to support his dream of recognizing student leaders by working behind the scene at Phi Lambda Sigma with the Founder’s Award, a scholarship fund for student leaders, and the Phi Lambda Sigma Executive Committee.”

The award, established in 1988, recognizes an individual whose long-term services and contributions at the national level have benefited APhA-ASP, and thereby pharmacy students in general. The award was renamed in 1994 to honor Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, University of the Sciences in Philadelphia Dean Emeritus and APhA Past President Dr. Linwood F. Tice who, in his capacity as Chair of the APhA Committee on Student Branches in 1952-55, was instrumental in the formation of the APhA organizational unit that evolved into APhA-ASP.

Thomas is the first and only state pharmacy director for the department. He received a degree in pharmacy from Auburn University in 1965. He had a successful career as a community pharmacist in Huntsville before accepting his current position in 1997. He has been instrumental in organizing the state’s bioterrorism drug stockpile response, streamlining purchasing/contracting procedures, and establishing the state’s controlled substance database. He also provides drug information to physicians and nurses within the department.

He has served as president of the Madison County Pharmaceutical Society, president of the Alabama Pharmacy Association, president of the Alabama State Board of Pharmacy, and president of the Auburn University Harrison School of Pharmacy Alumni

Association. He is an affiliate faculty member for both the Auburn University Harrison School of Pharmacy and Samford University McWhorter School of Pharmacy, and serves on the Dean’s Advisory Council of both schools.

Thomas has been an active member of the American Pharmacists Association since 1992 and served as chair of the APhA-APPM Community and Ambulatory Section. He has received the Bowl of Hygeia Award and is an APhA Fellow.

Among the other honors Thomas has received are Phi Lambda Sigma Founder’s Award, NARD Pharmacy Leadership Award, MSD Pharmacy Leadership Award, Alabama Commission on Pharmacy Distinguished Service Award and Birmingham Retail Druggists Service Award.



Charles Thomas, R.Ph.

## Commendations

**H**ealth 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*.

**Alfreda Arrington and entire warehouse staff**  
Logistics Division

from Amanda Calhoun  
Health Promotion and Chronic Disease

**Hazel Ashley, R.N.**

**Marie Carastro, M.S., L.R.D.**

**Suzanne Flynn, R.N.**

**Brenda Louis-Lee, R.N.**

**Martha Pszyk, M.S.W., L.G.S.W.**

**Beverly Morgan, M.S.W.**

**Debi Showers, R.N.,**

**Sheila Underwood, R.N.**

Health Provider Standards

from Richie Scoggins  
Clanton, Ala.

**Linda Bolding**

**Mable Jordan**

Center for Health Statistics

from Charlie T. Evans  
Washington, D.C.

**Glenda Edwards**

**Joanne Marshall-Kine**

**Ashvin Parikh**

Dallas County Health Department

from Patricia J. Martin  
Selma, Ala.

**Melissa O. Khan**

Health Promotion and Chronic Disease

from Philip R. Fine, Ph.D., M.S.P.H.  
Birmingham, Ala.

**Brenda Lee**

**Elizabeth McGraw**

**Sheila Underwood**

Health Provider Standards

from Sherry Ginn  
Phenix City, Ala.

**Georgia Reynolds**

Center for Health Statistics

from Apparao Mantha  
Hoover, Ala.

**Statistical Analysis Division**

Center for Health Statistics

from Steve Salmon  
Atlanta, Ga.

## Body Discipline

**T**hink of your body without the head  
There would be no you  
For you are dead.  
Think of your face without the eyes  
You'd be in darkness. You'd see no bright skies.  
Think of your head without a nose,  
The smell you'd miss of a beautiful rose.  
Think of your face without a mouth  
No figure of speech, your voice would be out.  
No tongue, no teeth, no liver, no heart  
For all are related to the other counterparts.

Now, think of the Health Department as a body and see  
That it functions only by you and me.  
Administration, then clerical, Vital Statistics up front

Environmentalists are essential to inspect restaurants.  
Social workers, nutritionists and nurses who care,  
Clinic aides and custodians needed everywhere.  
Home Health and Life Care a part of it too  
They're unique and special like me and you.

Now consider each other and work will be done  
Like our body each discipline is connected as one.

*By DELORES HARRISON, R.N.*  
*DALLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT*

## Crisis communications course to be offered

An eight-hour awareness-level course “Communicating about Bioterrorism,” will be offered 11 times during June and July. The course is designed to assist community leaders and public health professionals in responding to the media during crises. In this workshop, public health spokespersons and community leaders will learn how to effectively communicate with journalists and the public during crises related to bioterrorism.

Dr. William Evans, director of the Institute for Communication and Information Research and professor in the Department of Telecommunication and Film at the University of Alabama, will speak.

The following questions will be addressed: How is the public likely to respond to a crisis? How should you prepare and distribute messages during a crisis? What will journalists expect from you during a crisis? What questions are journalists likely to ask you? How can you communicate effectively in media conferences and in interviews with broadcast journalists?

### Course Objectives:

- \* Develop effective messages for dissemination via the media

- \* Predict questions that journalists are likely to ask during a bioterrorism event and prepare appropriate answers to these questions
- \* Effectively communicate on-camera (e.g., during media conferences and in interview with broadcast journalists)
- \* Develop a media/communication plan

Tailor messages to special needs populations

June dates and locations are as follows:

- \* June 3: Belk Activity Center (Tuscaloosa)
- \* June 20: Jefferson County EMA (Birmingham)
- \* June 28: Elliot Community Center (Gadsden)
- \* June 30: University of South Alabama Mobile Brookley Conference Center Dogwood Room (Mobile)

If you are interested in attending any of these sessions, please register with Natasha Ptomey at (205) 975-8963, [nptomey@uab.edu](mailto:nptomey@uab.edu) or for more information please visit the Web site [www.southcentralpartnership.org/preparedness](http://www.southcentralpartnership.org/preparedness).

## Black Belt Town Hall Meeting set for May 31 in Marion

Gov. Bob Riley and Congressman Artur Davis will participate in a joint town hall meeting to discuss Black Belt health care issues in Marion on Tuesday, May 31 at 5 p.m. The town hall meeting will take place at the Fine Arts Building Auditorium on the campus of Judson College. The focus of the town hall meeting will be on the work of the Health Committee of Gov. Riley’s Black Belt Action Commission, which is being chaired by Congressman Davis.

“There are many challenges that face citizens in the Black Belt, and one of the most pressing is access to quality health care,” Gov. Riley said. “This town hall meeting is an opportunity to highlight some of the work that the Black Belt Action Commission is taking to improve health care access in the region and to provide citizens with a venue to discuss the health care needs in their area.”

Congressman Davis said, “It is unacceptable that the quality of health care in the Black Belt is so different than the quality of health care in urban areas, and I compliment

the Governor for committing to address this disparity.”

On Aug. 11, 2004, Gov. Riley signed an Executive Order creating the Black Belt Action Commission. The Governor charged the Commission with proposing and working toward substantive solutions that will improve the quality of life in Alabama’s Black Belt.

The Black Belt is a band of largely rural counties stretching across the south-central part of the state. It has long been characterized by high rates of poverty, illiteracy, illegitimacy and economic stagnation.

The Health Committee is one of the 13 committees forming the Black Belt Action Commission. Members of the Health Committee include doctors, nurses, professors, health professionals, governmental officials, church leaders, representatives from non-profits organizations, and other citizens who want to make a difference.

For more information about the town hall meeting or the Governor’s Black Belt Action Commission, please visit [www.blackbeltaction.org](http://www.blackbeltaction.org) or call 334-353-1540.

Information also can be found on the Alabama Department of Public Health Web site at [www.adph.org](http://www.adph.org).

May is Mental Health Month, Lyme Disease Awareness Month, National Sight-Saving Month, Ultraviolet Awareness Month, National Neurofibromatosis Month, National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month, National Trauma Awareness Month, Older Americans Month, Skin Cancer Awareness Month, Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month, National Arthritis Month, National High Blood Pressure Education Month, Tuberous Sclerosis Awareness Month, National Physical Fitness and Sports Month



# Calendar of Events

**May 31**

Town Hall Meeting on Health Care, 5-7 p.m., Judson College Auditorium, Marion. Sponsored by the Governor's Black Belt Action Commission. For more information contact Chad Nichols or Sarah Boutwell, (334) 353-1543.



**June 1**

ADPH Emergency Response 101: The New Responsibility of Public Health—Required for all ADPH staff, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Michele Jones, (334) 206-5655.



**June 2**

HIV/AIDS Update 2005 for Home Care, Home Health Aides and Home Attendants, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Brenda Elliott, (334) 347-2664, extension 402.



**June 14-16**

Agricultural Security: A Conference on Agroterrorism, Spain Park High School, Hoover. For more information contact the South Central Center for Public Health Preparedness. Register on-line at <http://www.southcentralpartnership.org/preparedness/default.asp?ID=19> or call 205-934-7148.



**June 22**

Building Cross Cultural Competencies in Public Health, 12 noon-2:30 p.m. For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



**June 23**

National Incident Management System: Why It is Important for You and Your Work as a First Responder (SCCPHP), 12 noon-1:30 p.m. For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



**June 28**

Charting New Public Health Directions: CDC Looks to the Future, 1-2:30 p.m. For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



**June 29**

Public Health Staff Development, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Mary Scisney, (334) 206-2975.



**July 7**

ADPH Statewide Staff Meeting, 3-4 p.m., For more information contact Jim McVay, Dr.P.A., (334) 206-5600.



**July 13**

Clinical Issues in Contraception: A Focus on Progestin-only Methods, 2-4 p.m. Public Health Staff Development. For more information contact Annie Vosel, (334) 206-2959.

