

# ALABAMA'S

A PUBLICATION OF THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

# HEALTH

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## Clay County home health employees go the extra mile after 'wrong number'

**R**honda Cofield, Public Health Area VI Home and Community Services Continuous Quality Improvement/Educator, was in Clay County to make a visit with one of the nurses. While she was there she observed public health in action and at its best. Administrative Support Assistant Michelle Epperson received a "wrong number," a telephone call from a woman in Splendora, Texas, who had dialed Clay County's toll-free number by mistake.

Ms. Epperson realized that the woman was in need of some attention, and transferred the call to Kathy Graben, Home Health Nursing Supervisor, with the information that this was someone in Texas who was in need of help. Ms. Graben took the phone call, and within a few minutes had established that the woman was in a room with several others, including at least two children. They had neither power nor water.

The woman had glaucoma and emphysema. She was supposed to be on oxygen, but with no power and her concentrator not working, she had turned her oxygen down to one liter per minute instead of the ordered two liters per minute to conserve the reserve she had in her tank.

Her oxygen supply was fast running out. While Ms. Graben was talking with the lady and gathering information from her, Ms. Epperson was on the Internet coming up with toll-free numbers for home health care in Texas. Ms. Graben passed these numbers on to the caller,

who was so grateful for the care and concern she received.

"But that isn't the end," Ms. Cofield said. "Enter Elderly and Disabled Waiver social worker, Pam Anderson. Pam came in just in time to hear what had gone on. She immediately took the information that Kathy and Michelle had gathered, went to her computer and found a number for the police department in Splendora, Texas." She placed a call to them and gave them the information received in Lineville.

Ms. Cofield said, "Within the next few minutes, Pam received a call back. The police department had checked on this family in crisis, oxygen was on the way, and people in Texas now know what home health employees are like in rural Alabama."

When Carol Heier, case management consultant with the Bureau of Home and Community Services, learned about their actions, she wrote, "Thanks for taking the initiative to go the extra mile for this person in need. I do not believe in coincidence. You were there for a purpose and fulfilled that purpose with excellence."

Jacqueline Giddens, RN, MSN, CWOCN, added, "This is a great story of teamwork."

# ADPH celebrates National Home Care Month

Approximately 7.6 million Americans receive home-delivered health care daily from nearly 20,000 home health providers in the nation. In their honor, the department joins the National Association for Home Care and Hospice in celebrating November as National Home Care Month with the theme, "The Center of Healthcare in America."

"Caring for the sick, elderly and dying in their homes truly is a privilege for us," said Grover Wedgeworth, director of the Bureau of Home and Community Services. "Home care professionals, volunteers and modern medicine make it possible for people to stay in their homes, regardless of their condition. Their dignity and control are important to their well-being."

Through technological advances, home-delivered health care has grown far beyond basic professional nursing and home care aide services. A wealth of services can be provided in the home which could include nursing, physical, occupational, respiratory and speech therapies.

Home care services are paid for by public and private sources, or directly by patients or their families. Third-party payers include commercial insurance, managed care organizations and workers' compensation. Home care continues to be the preferred means of receiving quality

health care services for nearly five million Americans.

The Alabama Department of Public Health has provided quality home care since the inception of the department and has provided Medicare-certified home health care since 1966.

## Additional employees deployed to staff shelters recognized

The September issue of *Alabama's Health* listed the many individuals who helped staff shelters after Hurricane Katrina. Two Alabama Department of Public Health employees from Enterprise who were not included are listed here:

*Gayla Hollis*  
*Candace Hulsey*

### 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.

# Annual Arthritis Coalition meeting focuses on rheumatoid arthritis and lupus

This year's annual Arthritis coalition meeting, held on Sept. 9, 2005, focused on rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. The meeting examined methods and treatments for addressing and living with these illnesses.

Speakers for the meeting included Sarah Sampsel, a senior health care analyst from the National Committee for Quality Assurance in Washington, D.C.; Kristin Helms, a clinical assistant professor from Auburn University's Department of Pharmacy Practice, Harrison School of Pharmacy; Virginia Jackson, Area 7 Arthritis Coordinator and ASHC trainer and PACE trainer; and Dr. Sohrab Fallahi from Montgomery Rheumatology Associates.

The topics covered included *Quality Indicators for Rheumatoid Arthritis*, *Rheumatoid Arthritis and Lupus Medications*, and a surveillance and evaluation report on rheumatoid treatment access in the state.

"As always, I am so grateful to the speakers and members who took the time to come out and focus on arthritis. Each year these meetings help generate ideas of how to address arthritis more effectively in the state which can be implemented during the next year," said Linda Austin, director of the Arthritis Prevention Branch.

The statewide coalition was formed in February 2000 and consists of members from the Alabama Department of Public Health, the Arthritis Foundation, the University of Alabama and several hospitals, schools and state agencies. The coalition's mission is to coordinate the efforts of

individuals, groups, agencies and facilities to develop recommended strategies to address arthritis in Alabama.

In addition, the coalition developed a State of Alabama Arthritis Plan to meet the needs of persons at risk for, or already having, arthritis, and the needs of general health providers engaged in arthritis prevention and treatment.

The plan focuses on the following: promoting evidence-based self-management programs offered by the Alabama Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation; communicating through the news media the benefits of physical activity, weight management, and avoidance of occupational or sports-related injuries; utilizing current technologies such as the Web site, video and satellite conferences; enhancing the understanding of the frequency, distribution and potential risk factors for arthritis in the state of Alabama; improving access to rheumatology care in certain geographic locations; and integrating evaluation measures into activities.

During this year's meeting, updates were also presented on the work of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Arthritis Foundation, Alabama Chapter in Birmingham.

For more information on the Arthritis Coalition, please visit the Arthritis Prevention Web site at [www.adph.org/arthritis](http://www.adph.org/arthritis).

By TAKENYA STOKES

## Retirees named

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

### October -

**Ruth Moore** - Talladega County Health Department  
**Jennifer Rolison** - Baldwin County Health Department

### November -

**Patricia Colquitt** - Crenshaw County Health Department  
**Barbara Edwards** - Birmingham Laboratory  
**William Godwin** - Health Provider Services  
**Gerry Meegan** - Marshall County Health Department  
**John Parks** - Public Health Area VIII  
**Effie Williams** - Marshall County Health Department

# Center for Health Statistics helps evacuees obtain birth certificates from Louisiana

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, thousands of evacuees fled the flooding and destruction of their homes to find temporary housing elsewhere. The Louisiana vital records office was also affected since all of their birth and death records were stored in New Orleans and were inaccessible after the storm. Fortunately, the actual records themselves were located on the fifth floor of the building and were not damaged by flood waters, but hurricane evacuees born in Louisiana were not able to obtain the birth records they needed to establish their identity.

Cathy Molchan, director of the Quality Assurance and Registration Division of the Center for Health Statistics, took the lead in helping the Louisiana vital records office provide evacuees with their birth certificates. As a member of the Executive Committee for the National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems, Ms. Molchan coordinated arrangements with other state vital records registrars. "Almost all the states, including Hawaii, have cooperated in helping evacuees obtain Louisiana birth certificates," Ms. Molchan said, "and the process has worked really well."

With limited contact through cell phone and email, Ms. Molchan worked with the Louisiana office to establish a method for evacuees to request Louisiana birth certificates through the vital records offices in the states where they are currently located. Since birth certificates are restricted records, Louisiana requires evacuees requesting records to apply in person to be sure only those who are entitled to the records receive them. However, because of the catastrophic event, Louisiana officials did waive fees for evacuees.

To complicate the process, Louisiana has been working out of a temporary office in Baton Rouge with limited means of communication. The process Ms. Molchan developed, has the central vital records office in each state gather requests from evacuees and email them to Louisiana. Louisiana then sends the birth certificates back to the central vital records office for distribution to the evacuees.

In Alabama, evacuees born in Louisiana can go to any county health department to request Louisiana birth certificates. All Alabama county vital statistics registrars have copies of special Louisiana applications that they fax to Ms. Molchan in Montgomery. As the faxed applications arrive, she keys the information into an electronic format and e-mails the requests to the Louisiana office. After Louisiana sends the birth certificates back to



Cathy Molchan holds a package from the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals containing an estimated 40 to 50 birth certificates. She will distribute the certificates to addresses within Alabama.

Ms. Molchan using an express delivery service, she sends them to the county health departments to be picked up or mails them directly to the evacuees. The process takes about 10 days to complete since a very limited number of New Orleans staff have been at work for the past two months. So far, nearly 700 Louisiana birth certificates have been requested via the Alabama Center for Health Statistics.

All Alabama county health departments have assisted by processing the evacuees' requests for Louisiana birth certificates, but counties which have processed requests in quantity include Jefferson, Mobile, Baldwin, Calhoun, Lee, Montgomery and Tuscaloosa. Ms. Molchan said, "I know this process can be frustrating for county registrars, because we can issue our vital records in a matter of minutes instead of days. But they are glad to help the evacuees."

The Louisiana vital records office has now moved into a new building in New Orleans and computers and telephone lines are operational. Records still need to be moved to the new location, but business is returning to a more normal status. As operations resume, Ms. Molchan is hopeful the process for obtaining birth certificates will be expedited. Only evacuees may avail themselves of this special service. Others seeking Louisiana records must follow the standard request and payment procedures through the Louisiana office.

# Shelter experience is a story of heartbreak and hope for volunteer nurses from Geneva

A group of six nurses from Wiregrass Nursing Home in Geneva, distressed about the many desperate people injured and displaced by Hurricane Katrina, sought avenues to use their skills to assist those in dire need.

Nursing home staff often spend their lives trying to make life better for others, and they wanted to maximize their skills to care for those affected by the disaster during the Labor Day holidays. After waiting to hear from another assistance organization, Nursing Supervisor **Doreen Bock** and nurse **Nancy McLaney** took the initiative to go to the Alabama Department of Public Health Web site where a posting asked for nursing volunteers.

After contacting volunteer coordinator Jessica Hardy and making arrangements such as faxing copies of licenses and other papers, they were promptly given an assignment. On Saturday, Sept. 3, they departed Geneva for Mobile in two personal vehicles. After an initial assignment the first night at a hospital where they performed staff nursing duties for patients who were not storm victims, the nurses contacted Ms. Hardy and they were given the assignment they had really wanted.

The next day they were directed to the Medical Needs Shelter at the Fairhope Civic Center. Ms. Bock said Ms. Hardy was responsive to their needs, “She was very, very helpful in the process. She said, ‘let’s regroup’ and we were moved to Fairhope.”

The Fairhope Civic Center was a great facility, Ms. Bock said. There was a gym, showers, a recreation center with a public pool next door and cots with sheets and blankets were set up. Nutritious meals were brought in three times a day and served warm.

Reflecting a month later about their experiences, Ms. Bock and the Wiregrass volunteers said “This was a heartrending experience for all of us, and a blessing to us. We received more than we gave.”

**Janette Duzick**, an assessment and licensed practical nurse at the Geneva facility, said, “The people in the shelter all have stories. Within a matter of hours they had lost everything. We cared for them by changing dressings and doing other things, but we cried a lot, and listened a lot, and we offered what we could. It really opens your eyes.”

Ms. Duzick also praised the medical needs shelter at Fairhope. “It was very well organized and the community was so generous.”

If a need was identified, someone wrote it on a sticky



*Photo courtesy of Tim Hatch*

Cindy Boswell and Debbie Moulton answer phones.

note and placed it on a bulletin board. Before long, she said someone from the community picked up the note and returned with the needed item such as clothing, hygiene products and blankets.

“I have never seen a community pull together like this,” Ms. Duzick said. “They even helped with permanent placement for some people in need.” Heartbreaking stories were related in abundance. One older victim of Hurricane Katrina crawled up her stairwell and stayed in her shower stall throughout the hurricane and floated until a man going through the area helped place her on a door to carry her to safety.

A visually impaired man had to float on an ice chest until he was rescued. A man with diabetes told of having to stand in the floodwaters for three days, hence he acquired serious infections on his feet. Another man who had recently had ankle surgery was trying to survive on a rooftop. His legs were hanging in the water, and they became increasingly inflamed and infected.

Another compelling story was an older woman recently diagnosed with colon cancer. She had completed three chemotherapy treatments before Katrina when the flood of water swept her out of her house. According to her recollection, she floated on her refrigerator for several hours and when the water subsided she lay in the mud for three days until someone came to rescue her. The water had blown away her colostomy bag as well as much of her clothing.

*Nurses.....continued on page 6*

# 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*.

**Theresa Mulkey**  
Center for Health Statistics

from Kathleen Beckham  
Barleson, Texas

**Reginald Strickland**  
Center for Health Statistics

from Lisa Custaldo  
Montgomery, Ala.

**Theresa Mulkey**  
Center for Health Statistics

from Z.P. Todd, Jr.  
Casa Grande, Ariz.

**Catrinna Barber**  
Center for Health Statistics

from Marilyn Bowen  
Hoover, Ala.

**Kim Smith**  
Center for Health Statistics

from Jimmy Alfred Manley  
Wilmer, Ala.

**Reginald Strickland**  
Center for Health Statistics

from Chuck Carr  
Appleton, Wisc.

# Nurses.....continued from page 5

After reaching the shelter and getting loving care and attention, Ms. Duzick said the woman was strengthened and told them, "God wouldn't let me die, so I know He will save me from the cancer. He has a purpose for me."

Another lady in her late seventies donned a life jacket and latched herself to a post on her porch to save herself from drowning during the flooding. A young construction worker who did not speak English well had been outside when the hurricane arrived. Several bones in his legs had been crushed. Until he reached the Fairhope shelter he had been unable even to shower.

Some of the people in the shelter were so disoriented they couldn't remember very much of what had happened or their past. Ms. Bock said she worked with the older woman who was one of four persons transported to the Geneva nursing home. After a couple of weeks the woman remembered only a distant cousin's maiden name and the fact that the family was very active in church work.

Again taking the initiative, Ms. Bock called the police department out-of-state to explain the situation and to ask for the local newspaper name so she could advertise for a family contact. After telephoning the newspaper and giving the name of another distant cousin, a connection was made through yet another cousin.

The family was receptive and came to Geneva from Mississippi to pick her up and provide her a new home. Ms. Bock said, "The family was so appreciative. They called me yesterday and said she is doing fine."

Another former Mississippi resident told her that she

was happier than she had been before the storm when she had lived alone. Ms. Bock presumes the woman had early onset dementia because she had no short-term memory.

Two persons are being cared for in the nursing home, but family connections are not known.

At the shelter, the father of two sons related that his wife had just died from cancer in March, and he had retired from his teaching position to care for her. The family was in a real predicament when Katrina arrived because both sons were hospitalized in different places and one was a severe diabetic. The family was reunited in Fairhope and now has a house trailer to call home and a van to transport them, thanks to the community's support.

Ms. Duzick said, "I can't tell you how heartwarming it was that people gave from their hearts. And the evacuees were so grateful. They didn't know how many people were so kind and loving. It truly makes a difference that there are good people out there who open their homes, hearts and pocketbooks."

Ms. Duzick added, "I can't imagine how people had the will to overcome the tremendous odds. You stop and think about what they went through. I was really proud to be able to do something to help these people. I appreciate being given the opportunity to be a part of those moments. You know why we're here, and we would go again if needed."

Other volunteer nurses from Wiregrass Medical Center were **Linda Goforth, Jackie Hall, Nancy McLaney and Cynthia Diane Serna.**

# Alabama Tobacco Quitline takes part in the Great American Smokeout

**T**he Alabama Tobacco Quitline encourages smokers to take part in the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout Thursday, Nov. 17. The Great American Smokeout challenges smokers to give up cigarettes for one day. This is the first Great American Smokeout in which the Health Department's Alabama Tobacco Quitline, **1-800-Quit-Now**, is available for free counseling.

The Quitline provides counseling services for Alabamians who want to quit smoking or chewing tobacco. In April 2005, through funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Alabama Tobacco Cessation Quitline was launched and it has received more than 4,000 calls to date.

In Alabama, the consequences of smoking are devastating. More than 7,000 Alabamians die each year as a result of tobacco use, and another 1,000 youth and adults die from exposure to secondhand smoke. Annual healthcare costs in Alabama directly caused by smoking are \$1.38 billion. One in four adults is a smoker, and according to the Alabama Youth Tobacco Survey conducted in early 2004, 24 percent of high school students are current smokers.

The benefits of quitting smoking are numerous. According to the CDC, the risk of heart attack decreases within 24 hours of not smoking. Additionally, the risk of cancer, stroke and lung disease are greatly reduced. Within 20 minutes after smoking that last cigarette, the body makes changes that reduce the harm to the body from smoking.

## **Tips to help you quit from the Alabama Tobacco Quitline 1-800-Quit-Now:**

- Plan something enjoyable to do every day that does not include tobacco.
- Watch people around you who do not use tobacco. Ask yourself, "Do I really want this cigarette right now?"
- Wash the clothes you regularly wear.
- Clean out your car.
- Give away all your ashtrays.
- Make a commitment to having a smoke-free home.

To learn how to quit for good call the Alabama Tobacco Quitline for free counseling, 1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-800-784-8669. The Alabama Department of Public Health is taking part in the Great American Smokeout by participating in several activities statewide. Listed here are some scheduled events:

## **Decatur**

*Thursday, Nov. 17 at 6 p.m.*

Public Forum on the Effects of Secondhand Smoke Exposure

Tri-County Health Center, 510 Cherry St.

Contact: Joy Rhodes-Watkins, (256) 306-2430

Members of medical community will answer questions.

## **Dothan**

*Thursday Nov. 17, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.*

Effects of Secondhand Smoke Display

Wiregrass Commons Mall, 900 Commons Drive

Contact: Judy Guiler, (334) 699-2813

Residents can sign a clean air petition.

*Thursday, Nov. 17, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.*

Great American Smokeout Pledge Wall providing cessation information

Southeast Alabama Medical Center

1108 Ross Clark Circle

## **Fairfield**

*Thursday, Nov. 17, 6 - 8 p.m.*

Clean Indoor Air Forum

Fairfield Civic Center - Meeting Room -

6509 E. J. Oliver Blvd.

Contact: Virginia Bozeman, (205) 930-1485

## **Florence - Shoals Area**

*Thursday, Nov. 17, 12 noon*

Activity in the Park (Addicted to O2) - "O" Ring — Students Promote Clean Air

Wilson Park — Downtown Florence

Contact: Lerrie Harris, (256) 383-1231 — Colbert

County Health Department

Diane Peebles, (256) 767-0825 — American

Cancer Society

Valerie Thigpen, (256) 757-2102 — Lauderdale

County Schools

*Thursday, Nov. 17, 6 - 7:30 p.m.*

Public Forum — Clean Air Ordinance

Lauderdale County Health Department

4112 Chisholm Road

Contact: Lerrie Harris, (256) 383-1231

## **Montgomery**

*Thursday, Nov. 17, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.*

*Quitline.....continued on page 8*

# Alabama Rural Health Association recognizes rural health champions

In celebration of Gov. Bob Riley's proclamation of the week of Oct. 30 through Nov. 5 as Rural Health Week in Alabama, the Alabama Rural Health Association recognized several of Alabama's rural health champions in a ceremony at the State Capitol Nov. 4.

The Alabama Smoke Alarm Initiative was recognized with the Billie Gilliland Exceptional Contribution To Rural Accident Prevention Award. This initiative was



Shown are Deputy State Fire Marshal Scott Pilgreen, Bob Grantham, Keith Guthrie, Amanda Calhoun, Alonza Ellis, Lt. Gov. Lucy Baxley, Mickey Pritchett, Mary Till, Dennis Stripling, Jerry Pow and Terry Peeler.

established in 1998 because of Alabama's consistently high ranking for fire deaths and injuries. Federal grant funding was secured to reduce fire deaths and injuries in high-risk areas. Fire

departments in identified high-risk counties are invited to submit a competitive application to begin a smoke alarm initiative in their communities. Since October 2001, 15 local fire departments in nine counties have partnered in this initiative. Through this initiative, volunteers conduct door-to-door visits within the fire department's service area providing home fire safety education in all homes and installing free smoke alarms in homes that need them. Most fire departments participating in this initiative are in rural areas.

To date, in-home fire safety education has been provided to over 5,000 households and nearly 3,500 smoke alarms have been installed. Because of these efforts, there have been 43 documented instances where lives have been saved because of working smoke alarms. This initiative is administered by the Alabama Department of Public Health in conjunction with the State Fire Marshal's Office.

**Robert L. Gilliam, M.D.**, of Clayton



Lt. Gov. Lucy Baxley presents award to Robert Gilliam, M.D., of Clayton.

(Barbour County) was recognized with the Rural Health Provider Exceptional Achievement Award. Dr. Gilliam is a product of Ohio, being born in Dayton to a hard-working, God-fearing family. He completed medical school in three years, graduating from the Ohio State University Medical School with letters of honor in pediatrics and family medicine, and a letter of commendation in internal medicine. He is married, has two daughters, three stepsons and two grandchildren.

Dr. Gilliam credits God with bringing him to work with Southeast Alabama Rural Health Associates (SARHA) in 1990 to serve as family physician in the Clayton Family Health Center in Barbour County. He has served as medical director of SARHA since 1996 and is currently serving as the collaborating physician for a SARHA nurse practitioner. He takes pride in being a working medical director, making house calls and seeing patients on four days of each week. He sees over 6,000 patients per year.

Dr. Gilliam serves as a role model for family physicians and an advocate for rural medicine, being recognized with the Alabama Primary Healthcare Association's Outstanding Provider Service Award in 1997. He has a true commitment to the people and community he serves, further evidenced by his running the local volunteer ambulance service. He lives on a large farm where he raises rare breeds of cows, pigs, sheep, horses and ducks that are on the endangered species list.

**Kid One Transport** was recognized with the Rural Volunteer Excellence in Service Award. Kid One's mission is to transport children and expectant mothers, with limited or no transportation, to medical care. Kid One would like to ultimately alleviate the transportation barrier to medical care for all children and expectant mothers in Alabama.

Based on the current trip totals since founding the organization, Kid One has now provided over 90,000 rides! While this is a phenomenal accomplishment, there are additionally thousands of children in Alabama who have no viable means of transportation. The need for Kid One can be attested statewide. During 2004 alone Kid One denied over 2,000 trip requests due to lack of funding.

Kid One currently has a presence in 38 counties – 32  
*Rural health.....continued on page 10*



Tracy B. Smith, CEO/President of KidOne Transport, accepts award from Lt. Gov. Baxley.



# ADPH and UAB - Collaborating to Enhance Care

Staff from the Division of Tuberculosis Control of the Alabama Department of Public Health recently participated in a meeting sponsored by the Lung Health Center of the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Tuberculosis control staff of varied backgrounds (administrative, clinical and investigative) attended presentations from:

\* **Dr. Charles Woernle**, Assistant State Health Officer for Disease Control and Prevention, who welcomed the attendees and encouraged all to re-think how “change” and unforeseen challenges affect us. He shared his view that these events were actually “opportunities in disguise” and that adapting our response as such would likely lead to positive outcomes.

\* **Dr. John Bass**, who detailed the natural history of tuberculosis as well as the influence of this disease on the arts.

\* **Dr. William Bailey**, who discussed the global burden of tuberculosis and Alabama’s contribution to the control of this disease.

\* **Dr. Lynn Gerald**, who gave an overview of UAB’s “cutting edge” study on the prioritization of contacts exposed to active tuberculosis. The expected benefit of this study is a greater understanding of factors influencing the transmission of tuberculosis. Added benefits of greater understanding include the potential for prioritizing investigation and outreach activities without sacrificing disease intervention outcomes.

\* **Dr. Michael Lauzardo** of the Southeast National TB Center presented an outline of the new SNTC goals for training and consultation. According to Dr. Lauzardo, the training “mix” is expected to be 50 percent on-site and 50 percent in the field as indicated by a needs assessment that is currently underway.

\* **Carol Pozsik, R.N., M.P.H.**, Executive Director of the National TB Controller’s Association, shared the mission statement of the association and described their efforts as advocates for full funding of tuberculosis control.

Other sessions during the two-day meeting included break-out groups for administrative, clinical and investigative staff. Each discipline met with counterparts from across the state in a rare opportunity to compare notes on shared concerns.

Dr. Woernle wrapped up the meeting with a discussion of the importance of teamwork, and how leadership is found (and appreciated) at all levels in our agency. Dr. Woernle closed the meeting by expressing his appreciation for the conference support provided by UAB’s Lung Health Center, and encouraged all in attendance to continue the tradition of hard work and success that has defined the Division of Tuberculosis Control.

To learn more about training events for tuberculosis control, please contact Pam Barrett, Training Coordinator for the Division of Tuberculosis Control, at (334) 206-5330 or email at [PBarrett@adph.state.al.us](mailto:PBarrett@adph.state.al.us).

By *SCOTT JONES*

## Alabama students can get free online tutoring

Alabama students in fourth through 12th grades can connect to free online homework help from expert tutors from 3 p.m. to midnight daily by going to the Web site [www.homeworkalabama.org](http://www.homeworkalabama.org).

Live homework help is available seven days a week in the subjects of mathematics, science, social studies and English. Students can connect to a tutor through any computer with Internet access, including computers at their local public library or at home. Students must type in their zip code to use the free service.

Homework Alabama, serving as an extension of the classroom, ensures all children can get the help and attention they need. Once they log on, students select their grad level and the subject. Tutor.com selects and trains the tutors who are current and retired teachers, graduate students and college professors. Every tutor must pass a security check. In addition,

before they are hired, prospective tutors submit resumes and teaching samples that show how they would help a child solve particular problems, complete technology training, participate in mock sample session, undergo a 30-day probation period and work with a mentor.

Is it possible that students could use the system to get tutors to do their homework for them? No. Tutors are trained to prevent such problems and the company’s policies forbid a tutor from completing homework for students. Every tutoring session is recorded and monitored by the company.

Tutors help students with homework through the use of instant messaging, an interactive virtual “chalkboard” and shared Web browsing. Drawing and diagramming features allow tutors to demonstrate math and science concepts. When the session is completed, students can print their session for future reference or share it with a parent or teacher.

## Tobacco prevention grants serve communities

The Alabama Department of Public Health has awarded 12 agencies with Youth Tobacco Prevention and Control grants of \$30,000. The grants are to raise awareness of the dangers of environmental tobacco smoke and the availability of tobacco to under-aged youth thereby reducing youth tobacco use and consumption.

### Grantees for July 2005-2006 are as follows:

DeKalb County Board of Education  
Dothan-Houston County Substance Abuse Partnership  
East Alabama Mental Health-Mental Retardation Center  
Escambia County Board of Education  
Faith Outreach Ministries, Inc.  
Franklin County Board of Education  
Gateway  
Hoover City Board of Education  
Lauderdale County Board of Education  
Mobile County Health Department Teen Center  
Partnership for a Drug-Free Alabama, Inc.  
Wiregrass Mental Health System Inc., dba SpectraCare

Groups and agencies interested in applying for funding should contact Barry Riddle, Tobacco Prevention Division, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease, The RSA Tower, Suite 900, P.O. Box 303017, Montgomery, Ala. 36130-3017, (334) 206-5604, [briddle@adph.state.al.us](mailto:briddle@adph.state.al.us).

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of which are rural. Clients are referred to Kid One by anyone involved in the life of the child. Common referrals are made by physicians, neighbors, non-profit agencies serving children, social workers, school counselors/nurses, state agencies and family members.

Kid One serves children under the age of 19 and pregnant mothers in Alabama who do not have transportation to medical care. Eligible patients can request transportation to any facility that will better them mentally, physically or emotionally. These include doctors, clinics, hospitals, dentists and counseling services. Currently, Kid One operates with the assistance of a number of volunteers and employs 17 full-time drivers.

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## Quitline.....continued from page 7

Great American Smokeout and Community Awareness Day

Love Center International Church, 2830 Creative St.

Contact: Demetra Peoples, L.B.S.W., (334) 206-7071

### Pell City

*Wednesday, Nov. 16, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.*

Dangers of Secondhand Smoke Display and Secondhand Smoke Presentation

Pell City Health Fair, 2801 Stemley Bridge Road,

205-338-9713

Contact: LaTosha Croft, (205) 338-3357

*Thursday, Nov. 17, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.*

Educating students about the dangers secondhand smoke

Walter M. Kennedy Elementary, 250 Otis Perry Drive, (205) 338-7896

Contact: LaTosha Croft, (205) 338-3357

*Thursday, Nov. 17*

Area restaurants participate by going smoke free for the day

Contact: LaTosha Croft, (205) 338-3357

### Rehobeth

*Wednesday, Nov. 16, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

Great American Smokeout activities for SpectraCare

Great American Smokeout Graffiti Wall painted by Consumer Science students

Rehobeth High School, 373 Malvern Road

### Selma

*Thursday, Nov. 17, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.*

Community Awareness Day and Great American Smokeout

Carl Morgan Convention Center, 211 Washington St.

Contact: Niko Phillips, (334) 874-2550

### Tuscaloosa

*Thursday, Nov. 17 - 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.*

Informational Booth - Free information to help tobacco users go cold turkey.

McFarland Mall, 900 Skyland Blvd. East

Contact: Fayette Royal, (205) 554-4558

*By BROOKE THORINGTON*

# Speaking of Retirement - Monthly Benefit Selection

**W**hen a member submits a retirement application to the ERS, the staff calculates the monthly benefit under the Maximum monthly benefit and the Optional monthly benefits. This information is mailed to the retiring member along with a form (RETIREMENT OPTION SELECTION) for the member to elect the option corresponding to the monthly benefit the retiring member wishes to receive. **If no election of an option is made prior to the effective date of retirement, the law specifies that the member will receive the Maximum retirement benefit. Once the member retires, the monthly benefit cannot be changed.**

## Maximum Monthly Benefit

The Maximum monthly benefit is the highest monthly benefit available to a retiring member of the ERS. This benefit is a lifetime benefit paid to the retiree on a monthly basis. This benefit is calculated based on the member's average final salary times service credit times the retirement factor (.020125 or .02875 for State Police). At the death of the retiree, all monthly benefits cease. The designated beneficiary(s) will receive a one-time prorated monthly benefit covering the days of the month that the retiree was still living.

## Optional Monthly Benefits

**A member may provide a benefit for a beneficiary by selecting one of the following options.**

### Option 1

The monthly benefit under Option 1 is slightly less than the Maximum. This benefit is a lifetime benefit paid to the retiree on a monthly basis; however, if the retiree dies prior to receiving payments exceeding his or her account balance, the remaining balance will be paid to the designated beneficiary(s).

### Option 2 (100 percent Survivor Benefit)

Option 2 allows the retiree to receive a reduced benefit over the life of the retiree in return for allowing the designated beneficiary (only one beneficiary may be designated) to receive the same lifetime benefit after the retiree's death. The benefits are based on the ages of the retiree and the beneficiary. Therefore, once the member retires, he or she cannot change the beneficiary unless the beneficiary predeceases the retiree or if the retiree and the beneficiary become divorced. See **Replacement Beneficiary.**

### Option 3 (50 percent Survivor Benefit)

Option 3 allows the retiree to receive a reduced benefit over the life of the retiree in return for allowing the designated beneficiary (only one beneficiary may be designated) to receive one-half of the retiree benefit over the beneficiary's lifetime after the retiree's death. The benefits

are based on the ages of the retiree and the beneficiary. Therefore, once the member retires, he or she cannot change the beneficiary unless the beneficiary predeceases the retiree or if the retiree and the beneficiary become divorced. See **Replacement Beneficiary.**

### Option 4

Members may elect to receive a monthly benefit actuarially equivalent to the regular retirement benefit. The ERS Board of Control must approve this option. The monthly benefit paid to the beneficiary cannot exceed the limits determined by federal taxation laws.

## Replacement Beneficiary

Retirees who elected joint survivor options (Option 2, 3 or 4) at the time of retirement may name a new beneficiary under either of the two following conditions:  
If the named beneficiary dies before the retired member

**Or**

There is a divorce between the retired member and the beneficiary.

The retired member should contact the ERS for information and forms. Generally, there will be a recalculation of the benefit amount for the retired member and beneficiary. The replacement beneficiary must be in place for at least two years to become effective. However, if the retired member dies within this two-year period, no monthly survivor benefit is payable.

*Prepared by the Communications staff of the Retirement Systems of Alabama. To have your questions answered in "Speaking of Retirement," please address them to:*

*Mike Pegues, Communications  
Retirement Systems of Alabama  
135 South Union St.  
P. O. Box 302150  
Montgomery, Ala. 36130-2150*

## Rural health.....continued from page 10

Each of these Transport Team members average 300 plus miles per day, five days a week, servicing clients.

Kid One Transport was recently recognized by Johnson and Johnson as "One of America's Most Innovative Healthcare Programs."

*By DALE QUINNEY*



# Calendar of Events



**November 10**

Components of Family Planning Chart Review: Would Your Chart Stand Up to Scrutiny? (part 3 of 3), 2 - 4 p.m. For more information contact Video Communications Division, (334) 206-5618.



**November 15**

Coping With Uncertainty: Crisis Communication and Disaster Behavioral Health, 12 noon - 1:30 p.m. For more information contact Video Communications Division, (334) 206-5618.



**November 17**

Loss of Bladder Control Across the Population: Who's Affected and How Can People Get Diagnosed and Treated?, 3 - 4 p.m. For more information contact Video Communications Division, (334) 206-5618.



**November 29**

Home Health Aides and Home Attendants, 2 - 4 p.m. For more information contact Brenda Elliott, (334) 237-2664, extension 402.



**December 5**

Addressing Disaster and Emergency Stress Beyond First Responders: Implications for Individuals, Families and the Workplace, 12 noon-1:30 p.m. For more information contact Video Communications Division, (334) 206-5618.



**January 5**

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

**May 3-5**

50th Annual Alabama Public Health Association Health Education Conference, Radisson Hotel (to be Doubletree Hotel in March), Birmingham. For more information contact Ricky Elliott, Vice President, (251) 867-5765.



