

# ALABAMA'S

A PUBLICATION OF THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

# HEALTH

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## Emergency preparedness area response teams 'ready to roll' with new trailers, generators

The area response teams of the Alabama Department of Public Health are now ready for quick deployment in the event of an emergency with the recent purchase of new trailers and generators. This equipment will be used to respond in the event of bioterrorism outbreaks of infectious disease and other public health threats and emergencies such as weather, chemical, radiological and industrial disasters.

The equipment consists of two enclosed trailers for each of the 11 public health areas. One trailer is dedicated to housing and transporting four portable power generators and related equipment such as power cords and extra gas. The 6-kilowatt generators are easily portable since they are mounted on wheels. The second trailer is used to transport general cargo such as nursing kits, first aid kits, environmental kits, food, water, medications or administrative supplies. With these new assets, the area response teams should be able to respond to any location in the state or in neighboring states within a few hours of notification.

"We anticipate using them in any situation where we need power for lights or computers whether indoors or outdoors," said Ray Sherer, director of operations for the Center for Emergency Preparedness. "This is something we have needed for quite a while and this gives us the mobility, flexibility and assets that we need to respond in a professional way."

The Central Office retained two trailers and four generators as a reserve in the Logistics Unit in Montgomery. The total purchase of 24 trailers and 48



*Photo courtesy of Kent Speigner*

Trailers such as this one were delivered to all public health areas to help the public in emergencies.

generators was funded by federal Emergency Preparedness dollars. Each set of equipment represents an approximate value of more than \$12,000.

Security is foremost, so several locks are provided. The equipment is kept in a variety of locations at the area level, including with the local Sheriff's Department, the local emergency management agency, and at a county equipment lot. The trailers can be hitched to pickup trucks, sports utility vehicles or vans. The State Motor Pool has some vehicles which would be available for transportation in emergency events.

For more information contact Kent Speigner, Emergency Management Planner, (334) 206-7931, e-mail [kspeigner@adph.state.al.us](mailto:kspeigner@adph.state.al.us).

# Alabama Abstinence-Only Education Program participates in regional workshop emphasizing parental involvement

**A** national organization, the Institute for Youth Development, chose Montgomery as one of three locations nationwide, along with Denver, Colo., and Waco, Texas, for its regional workshop “Maximizing Program Effectiveness - A Technical Assistance Workshop for Abstinence Educators” held on Sept. 27, at the Alabama Industrial Development Training Center.

The institute is a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring the best possible future for America’s children by promoting positive choices and behaviors ([www.youthdevelopment.org](http://www.youthdevelopment.org)).

As one of the Institute’s numerous programs and activities focused on youth development and youth risk behavior prevention, its abstinence education initiative was a “perfect fit” for collaborative efforts with the Alabama Abstinence-Only Education Program of the Bureau of Family Health Services.

As a direct result of the program’s collaborative contact network of professionals working in the area of abstinence education, adolescent sexual risk behavior, and positive youth development statewide, the Montgomery regional workshop had the largest attendance of any of the three regional workshops.

Fifty-nine professionals from across the state attended the workshop, which featured national trainers conducting dynamic and interactive sessions on topics such as “Why Parents Matter—Reaching Out to Parents” and “Why Marriage Matters.”

Susan R. Stewart, program director, said, “The IYD, and the AAEP, believe that if parents and adults provide children and teens with consistent risk-avoidance messages, they will be capable of choosing to avoid these behaviors altogether.”

The Alabama Abstinence-Only Education Program, which helped plan and coordinate the workshop, participated in the event along with the project coordinators/staff from the program’s nine community-based projects that teach and promote abstinence-only until marriage, primarily in schools, to youth 17 years of age and younger in 34 of Alabama’s 67 counties.

For more information about the AAEP, or to request free abstinence-only educational materials from the program, please log onto [www.adph.org/abstinence](http://www.adph.org/abstinence) or contact Susan R. Stewart, RN, MSN, program director, at (334) 206-2901.

**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

*Alabama’s Health* is an official monthly publication of the Alabama Department of Public Health, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease. If you would like to receive the publication or wish to submit information for future articles, please telephone requests to (334) 206-5300. Articles may be reprinted provided credit is given to the Alabama Department of Public Health. The department’s Web site is <http://www.adph.org>

- 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

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

# 'Tis the season; take care to avoid fires and injuries

**T**he Alabama Department of Public Health joins the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission in reminding you to look for and eliminate potential dangers this holiday season. Lights and decorations could lead to fires and injuries, and often do. Hospital emergency rooms treat thousands of people each year for injuries this time of year, and December is the month with the highest number of fire deaths.

## **Trees**

When buying an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant." Although this label does not mean the tree will not catch fire, it does indicate the tree will resist burning and should extinguish quickly.

When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin. When tapped on the ground; the tree should not lose many needles. Be sure to secure it in a sturdy stand away from heat sources and water it daily. Do not place it in a location that will block an exit.

## **Lights**

Indoors or outdoors, use only lights that have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory, which indicates conformance with safety standards

Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections. Discard damaged sets.

Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord.

Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights and a person touching a branch could be electrocuted.

Before using lights outdoors check labels to be sure they have been certified for use outdoors.

Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage. Use only insulated staples to hold strings in place, not nails or tacks or run strings of lights through hooks. The lights could short out and start a fire.

Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. Lights could short out and start a fire.

For added electric shock protection, plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters. These can be purchased

where electrical supplies are sold or can be installed permanently to household circuits by a qualified electrician.

## **Decorations**

Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose tinsel or artificial icicles of plastic or nonleaded metals. Leaded materials are hazardous if ingested by children

Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Always use non-flammable holders and place candles where they will not be knocked down.

In homes with small children, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable, keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children to avoid the child swallowing or inhaling small pieces, and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a child to eat them.

Wear gloves to avoid eye and skin irritation while decorating with spun glass "angel hair." Follow container directions carefully to avoid lung irritation while decorating with artificial snow sprays.

## **Fireplaces**

Use care with "fire salts," which produce colored flames when thrown on wood fires. They contain heavy metals that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation and vomiting if eaten. Keep them away from children.

Do not burn wrapping papers in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrapping ignites suddenly and burns intensely. Finally, December has the second highest number of suicide deaths in the year. Be kind to others who may suffer from the stresses of the season during the winter days with the least amount of daylight hours.



## Site offers database of local health facilities, services

**H**ealth InfoNet of Alabama, a free, library-based, consumer health information service, in participation with the National Library of Medicine's MedlinePlus "Go Local" initiative, has launched its new Web site. The new site ([www.healthinfonet.org](http://www.healthinfonet.org)), one of the first six "Go Local" sites in the country to go live, includes a statewide database of local health facilities and services.

This database, with resources ranging from adult day care services to weight management programs, currently holds around 1,300 records and is searchable by service type or health issue focus, as well as location (city, county or zip code). Through the nationwide "Go Local" initiative, users of the comprehensive, award-winning MedlinePlus consumer health information Web site ([www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov)) can link to local consumer health Web sites, such as Health InfoNet's, to find health services in their communities, in addition to linking from the local sites to MedlinePlus for reliable, current health information.

Health InfoNet began in 1999 as a partnership between UAB Lister Hill Library and the Jefferson County public libraries. Its primary goal is to provide easy access to authoritative resources for residents' health information

needs. In 2004, concurrent with its selection by the National Library of Medicine as a "Go Local" participant, Health InfoNet expanded its service area statewide throughout Alabama. This extended the partnership to all public and medical libraries in the state. Thus, residents of Alabama, for example, could now go to their local public library for access to up-to-date health information collections and assistance from library staff in locating the best resources for their particular needs.

In addition, those users can also count on their local library being able to forward their information requests to the premier academic medical libraries in the state, UAB Lister Hill Library or the University of South Alabama's Baugh Biomedical Library, if sufficient information cannot be found locally. This statewide multi-institutional partnership furthers the long-standing Health InfoNet goal of empowering consumers by providing efficient and easy access to reliable, current health information.

For more information about Health InfoNet of Alabama and the "Go Local" program, or to suggest health resources for the Web site database, contact project director Kay Hogan Smith at (205) 934-2230.

## Pink Book includes new immunization recommendations

**T**he Public Health Foundation is pleased to announce the February 2006 release of the 9th edition of "Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases" (The Pink Book). The Pink Book is developed and published by the National Immunization Program, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Pink Book provides physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and other public health and healthcare professionals with comprehensive vaccine information and recommendations, such as: general recommendations on immunizations including timing and spacing of vaccines, screening for contraindications and precautions like pregnancy and HIV infection; specific strategies to achieve high vaccine coverage; and vaccine safety.

New recommendations for the 9th edition include:

- Pertussis (licensure of Tdap and recommendations for its use)
- Meningococcal (licensure of conjugate vaccine and

recommendations for its use)

- Hepatitis A (universal recommendation for children 12-23 months and reduction of minimum age from 2 years to 12 months).

- Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Varicella and the licensure of MMRV

The Public Health Foundation is now taking prepublication orders at a discounted price of \$25 per copy plus shipping fees until Jan. 9, 2006. Orders of 250 or more copies will receive a 25 percent bulk discount. To order at the best possible rates, please go online to <http://bookstore.phf.org/prod463.htm>. You may also order by calling toll free at (877) 252-1200.

# HIV/AIDS Division receives ‘unsung hero’ award

**P**roject EXPORT (Excellence in Partnerships for Community Outreach, Research on Health Disparities and Training) wanted to publicly honor the HIV/AIDS Division for its “untiring efforts” in the community by presenting it with an “Unsung Hero” award. The award was presented during the project’s Second Annual HIV/AIDS Health and Wellness Black Belt Tour on Oct. 28. The purpose of the tour is to increase awareness and educate the public on HIV/AIDS as well as other health conditions which disproportionately affect the residents of the Alabama Black Belt.



Shown, left to right, front row, Harold “Brownie” Brown, Mary McCall, Kristi Cheek, Joan Greene, Chuck Rogers. Back row, Sandra Jones, Tabitha Smith, Stephanie Foulke, Danna Strickland, Sharon Gunn, Randy Jones, Jane Cheeks, Sharon Jordan, Eumkeea Bender, Fay Hanna.

## Choctaw County Health Department assists evacuee family

**T**he following note is from a family evacuated to Choctaw County from St. Bernard Parish, La. The family is still in Choctaw County awaiting a FEMA trailer because their home was a total loss after Hurricane Katrina. On arrival in Choctaw County the family (who only planned to be gone one to two days) left with only a few clothes and no food. The only toys the children, age 2 and 3 had was a small stuffed animal one of them had as they were carried to the car late at night.

A nurse has welcomed them to stay in her weekend home. The staff bought toys and clothes for the family. The children were also enrolled in WIC and the family was referred to the American Red Cross for assistance as well as to the Department of Human Resources.

### To Everyone at the Health Unit,

Our family would like to express our heartfelt appreciation for all of the kindness you have shown to us in our great time of need.

Thank each one of you for the clothes, toys, etc. Thanks also for the kindness, time and concern for our family. May God richly bless each one of your families. Thanks from the bottom of our hearts.



# Area VI office, Racine Waddell commended

*This is the text of a letter sent to Scott Jones of the TB Control Division Nov. 21.*

**O**n behalf of the leadership team at Honda Manufacturing of Alabama and our 4,500 associates, please accept our sincere appreciation in your assistance with our recent public health issue.

The quick response and professionalism of your office, and particularly that of Racine Waddell of the Area VI office, was a comfort to our entire staff and helped assist in the educational efforts of our team in how best to deal with this issue.

Again, thank you for your service and professionalism during this matter.

## 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*.

**Kelly Alexander**  
Center for Health Statistics

from Traci Kostrzewski  
Warren, Minn.  
from Calvin Brown  
Maywood, Ill.

**Catrinna Barber**  
Center for Health Statistics

from Fance Franck  
Paris, France

**Pam Barrett**  
TB Control Division  
**Charlotte Denton**  
Infection Control Division

**John Hankins**  
Public Health Nursing

**Elana Parker**  
HIV/AIDS Division

from Mike Haley  
Mobile, Ala.

**Linda Bolding**  
Center for Health Statistics

from Gerald Thompson  
Carrollton, Ga.

**Center for Health Statistics Staff**  
Montgomery, Ala.

from Shirley Whisnant  
Geneva, Ala.

**Jim McNeas**  
Office of Radiation Control

from Jo Sims  
Pelham, Ala.

**Theresa Mulkey**  
Center for Health Statistics

from Marie Gardner  
Detroit, Mich.

**Reginald Strickland**  
Center for Health Statistics

from Chuck Carr  
Appleton, WI  
from Lisa Custaldo  
Montgomery, Ala.

**Video Communications Staff**  
Health Promotion and Chronic Disease

from Kyle King-Reynold  
Montgomery, Ala.

## Barganier retires

The director of the Office of Primary Care and Rural Health Development, Clyde Barganier, Dr.P.H., has retired from a public health career that began in 1967 as a public health representative in Mobile and included more than 32 years with the Alabama Department of Public Health. In bidding farewell to his colleagues he stated, "I know of no better community service than a public health career." The 2003 recipient of the President's Award of the Alabama Primary Health Care Association, Barganier worked to improve health care access while promoting the health status of rural residents, minority and other medically underserved populations through activities which stabilize health care systems. The Appalachian Regional Commission also recognized Alabama for efficiently administering the J-1 Program which places foreign-trained physicians in communities designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas. The Alabama Department of Public Health through the Office of Primary Care and Rural Health Development places more J-1 Visa Waiver physicians in Alabama through its State 30 Program than any other government entity.



## Retirees announced

The following employees have announced their retirements, effective in December 2005 and January 2006:

### December

*Ronald Grantland* — Public Health Area II  
*Ruby Price* - Houston County Health Department  
*John Till* - Rural Health

### January

*Geraldine Cochran* - Tuberculosis Control  
*Judy Morris* - Lauderdale County Health Department  
*Donna Rawlings* - Public Health Area V

## Health topics promoted on Montgomery TV station

Each month dedicated staff appear on WAKA's Midday News program's health segment in Montgomery to discuss relevant health issues and to answer calls from the public. To show our appreciation, *Alabama's Health* would like to recognize these staff members who take the time to participate in this valuable service.

October's guest was *Amanda Calhoun*, fire safety program manager for the Injury Prevention Division. Ms. Calhoun discussed how to prevent fire-related injuries and death and what to do to prepare for a fire emergency.

November's guest was *Debra Griffin*, nurse educator with the Diabetes Branch. Ms. Griffin spoke about Diabetes Awareness Month and the status of diabetes in Alabama.

December's guest was *Jane Cheeks*, director of the HIV/AIDS Division. Ms. Cheeks highlighted World AIDS Day and talked about diagnosis and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

If you would like to appear on WAKA's Midday News program, please contact Takenya Stokes at 334-206-7026, or by e-mail at [tstokes@adph.state.al.us](mailto:tstokes@adph.state.al.us).

# Patty Leonard presented first County Clerical Excellence Award

More than half the clients seeking services at the DeKalb County Health Department are non-English speaking, and with the leadership of Office Manager Patty Leonard “everything runs smoothly.” Nominators said she sets an example of excellence for others. For this and many other commendable attributes, she has been selected as the first recipient of the Alabama Department of Public Health County Clerical Excellence Award.

A nominator said, “In her day-to-day supervision of the clerks, she strives to treat every patient with kindness and dignity. Patty is always seeking new ways to run the front desk more efficiently so that patients are seen more quickly. She is not only knowledgeable of her own responsibilities, but also the general business of the Health Department.”

A letter of support stated, “Like all good public health employees, Patty can assist in any place where she is needed. Patty will assist in vital statistics one day and help home health and life care with administrative paperwork the next. Patty is a true role model for her coworkers through her actions and ‘can do’ attitude.”

Several letters of nomination mentioned that Ms. Leonard shows all individuals respect and courtesy, even under difficult circumstances. One described a morning when Ms. Leonard witnessed a terrible wreck as she was driving to work. After calling for emergency assistance she held a small child who had been in the crash and communicated as best she could with the driver who could not speak English to help her calm down until emergency help arrived.

Another nominator said of the Area V employee in Fort Payne, “She sparked a sense of teamwork and unity,” and with improved communication, the quality of patient care improved.

An additional letter of support stated, “She has never hesitated to defend those who are doing their best, or to advocate for what is right in her clinic.”

In making the announcement of the award Nov. 16 during a statewide staff meeting broadcast by satellite, Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer, pointed out that the County Clerical Excellence Award was created to recognize outstanding achievement. Recipients are to demonstrate vision, innovation or creativity in performance of job duties; to have rapport with coworkers and clients; and to serve as an example of excellence to others.



Pictured at the presentation in DeKalb County on Nov. 22 are, left to right, Janet Hill, clerical director, Public Health Area V; Mary Gomillion, area administrator, Public Health Area V; Patty Leonard, DeKalb County Health Department; Shelia Puckett, state clerical liaison, Office of Professional and Support Services; and Frances Kennamer, director, Office of Professional and Support Services.

Each of the 11 public health area teams selected one nominee to be submitted for the statewide award. The Office of Professional and Support Services and area clerical directors donated a monetary award in the amount of \$100.





# Speaking of Retirement

## Social Security Is Important to Women

**S**ocial Security is gender neutral - individuals with identical earnings histories are treated the same in terms of benefits. However, due to certain demographic trends, women benefit from the Social Security program in several ways.

With longer life expectancies than men, elderly women tend to live more years in retirement and have a greater chance of exhausting other sources of income. They benefit from Social Security's cost-of-living protections because benefits are annually adjusted for inflation.

- Women reaching age 65 in 2004 are expected to live, on average, an additional 20 years compared with 17 years for men.
- Women represent 58 percent of all Social Security beneficiaries age 62 and older and approximately 70 percent of beneficiaries age 85 and older.

The Social Security system is progressive in that lower-wage earners receive a higher percentage benefit than higher-wage earners do. The system returns a greater percentage of pre-retirement earnings to a lower-wage worker than to a higher-wage worker. Women who are low-wage workers receive back more benefits in relation to past earnings than do high-wage earners.

- The median earnings of full-time women workers in 2002 were \$30,203, compared to \$39,429 for men. Women's earnings relative to men have increased from 61 percent of men's earnings in the 1960s to 77 percent in 2002. At the end of 2003, women's average monthly retirement benefit was \$798. Men's average benefit was \$1,039. Social Security provides dependent benefits to spouses, divorced spouses, elderly widows, and widows with young children.
- For unmarried women - including widows - age 65 and older, Social Security comprises 52 percent of their total income. In contrast, Social Security benefits comprise only 38 percent of unmarried elderly men's retirement income and only 35 percent of elderly couples' income.

Social Security is the only source of retirement income for 29 percent of unmarried elderly women.

Elderly women are less likely than elderly men to have significant income from pensions other than Social Security. In 2002, only 21 percent of women aged 65 or older were receiving their own pensions (either as a retired worker or survivor), compared to 28 percent of men.

- Pension coverage is increasing for women in today's workforce. In 2002, 53 percent of women employed full-time were participants in a pension plan compared to 54 percent of

men. Women generally receive lower pension benefits due to their relatively lower earnings.

Visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/women](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/women) for more information of interest to women and retirement. Prepared by the Communications staff of the Retirement Systems of Alabama.

## Most Frequently Asked Questions from Retired Members

### *When will I receive my retirement benefit check?*

The ERS issues retirement checks on the last working day of the month. For example, if your retirement date is Nov. 1, 2005, your first check will be issued on Wednesday, Nov. 30, 2005, which is the last working day of the month.

Electronically deposited checks will be deposited on that same day.

The ERS strongly encourages retirees to elect to have their retirement benefit checks sent directly to their bank by electronic funds transfer (EFT), also known as direct deposit. Members using direct deposit do not have to worry about lost, stolen, or damaged checks, nor arrange for someone to deposit their checks when they are out of town or unable to go to the bank. This service is free, secure, reliable and convenient.

To obtain a Direct Deposit Authorization form, contact the ERS at 1-800-214-2158 or download the form from our Web site at [www.rsa.state.al.us](http://www.rsa.state.al.us).

### *Will I automatically receive a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) every year?*

No. COLAs for state retirees are made on an ad hoc basis by the state legislature. The amount of the increase is based upon the provisions of the legislation. COLAs for retirees of Section 12 agencies (nonstate member agencies) usually require approval of the governing body of the ERS agency, which must fund the cost of living increase for persons retired from that agency.

### *What will be deducted from my retirement benefit check?*

The following amounts may be deducted from your retirement benefit check:

- Federal income taxes
- Health and miscellaneous insurance premiums if applicable
- ARSEA dues of applicable

Your retirement benefit is not subject to Alabama income tax. If you move to another state, your benefit will be subject to that state's tax laws. You can find information about other states' tax laws at [www.1040.com](http://www.1040.com).

### *May I change my beneficiary after I retire?*

If you selected the Maximum benefit or the Option 1

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# New Leaf Project promotes better choices for healthier living

**T**he Alabama Community Health Advisors are expanding the Wisewoman Partner Project, “A New Leaf: Choices for Healthy Living.”

The purpose of the project is to determine the feasibility of using community health advisors to implement healthy lifestyle and weight loss programs. This is an important issue because of the high prevalence of overweight (27.3 percent) and obesity (29.6 percent) among women in Alabama and the lack of community-based behavioral weight loss programs in rural parts of the state.

The targeted population initially was three underserved rural Black Belt counties: Macon, Lowndes and Greene. These counties were chosen based on estimated burden of chronic disease and on availability of community health advisors previously trained in cancer and cardiovascular risk reduction. Macon and Greene counties are among the top 25 percent of Alabama counties for estimated burden of chronic disease, and Lowndes County is above the state median.

During May 2005 New Leaf Intervention Training was provided for 26 community health advisors, five faith-based health team members/parish nurses, eight health department staff and four Office of Women’s Health steering committee members. In October, 23 more advisors were trained.

Five specific sites and teams have been identified for implementing the New Leaf intervention in the three initially identified counties. An additional seven sites and team leaders have been identified from the October training for implementation in five additional counties: Coosa, Mobile, Dallas, Monroe and Wilcox.

Jessica Hardy, director of the Office of Women’s Health, said, “By using CHAs already trained through the CDC REACH 2010 project to promote mammography screening in underserved women ages 40-60, we are reaching women who have already been identified by our breast and cervical cancer program.”

Funding, partnerships and collaborations include

- CDC Chronic Disease Center Nutrition Section
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill WISEWOMAN Nutrition Section
- Community Health Advisors
- Montgomery Area Community Wellness Coalition, River Region

Within the department, the Office of Minority Health, Nutrition and Physical Activity Unit, Diabetes Branch and Cardiovascular Branch are involved.



The 90-minute classes covered low fat food/favoring fiber, discovering dairy alternatives/replacing meat, planning healthy meals/antioxidants and phytochemicals, immune-boosting foods/maintaining a healthy weight.



Dr. Groesbeck Parham and Katherine Parham address nutrition during the free Macon County Foods for Life cooking classes at Greenwood Missionary Baptist Church in Tuskegee.

# Speaking of retirement.....continued from page 9

benefit, you may change your beneficiary or beneficiaries at any time.

If you selected the Option 2 or Option 3 benefit, you 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 benefit is payable.

***I retired on disability. What are the requirements for me to continue receiving disability retirement?***

A disability retiree will be reviewed once each year for

the first five years and once every three-year period thereafter until age 60 (52 for State Police) to determine whether the retired member remains disabled. Disability retirees will be sent a PHYSICIAN'S REPORT ON DISABILITY and a QUESTIONNAIRE ON DISABILITY RETIREMENT for each evaluation period.

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



*Photo courtesy of Kent Speigner*

Many partners cooperated in getting Emergency Preparedness trailers delivered recently. The trailers were staged at the State Farmers Market and members of the Trussville Fire Department assisted as well. Mac Spurlin drove this trailer.



December is National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month  
Safe Toys and Gifts Month



# Calendar of Events



**January 5**

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



**January 11**

STD Update for Clinicians and Counselors, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Annie Vosel, (334) 206-2959.



**January 25**

Training for Home Health Aides and Home Attendants, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Brenda Elliott, (334) 347-2664; extension 402.



**January 26**

Fitness with EnhanceFitness: An Evidence-Based Intervention for Older Adults and People with Chronic Disease, 12-2:30 p.m. For more information contact Video Communications Division, (334) 206-5618.



**February 1**

HIV/AIDS Public Health Staff Development, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Michele Jones, (334) 206-5655.



**February 7**

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Annie Vosel, (334) 206-2959.

**April 2-8**

National Public Health Week

**April 7**

World Health Day

**May 3-5**

50th Annual Alabama Public Health Association Health Education Conference, Radisson Hotel (to be Doubletree in March), Birmingham.

