

Alabama's health

A publication of the Alabama Department of Public Health

Department's State Combined Campaign Sets New Record

Congratulations to the employees of the Alabama Department of Public Health for exceeding the State Combined Charities Campaign goal set at \$62,500. The total donations between Sept. 10 and Dec. 31 were \$83,548.33, the most ever contributed with 87 percent participation.

"I want to thank everybody," said Campaign Chairperson Sherry Bradley. "It took all of us, and we had fun doing it. We had a blast." Ms. Bradley frequently sent funny e-mails to employees reminding them to donate and participate in the many fundraisers held to benefit the campaign.

Several fundraising events were held including an omelet breakfast benefit and gridiron contest by the Bureau of Family Health Services, a pizza extravaganza for the Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease, a gas card give-away by the Office of Radiation Control, hot dogs for all at the Bureau of Clinical Lab. Employees making pledges were awarded days when they could wear blue jeans to work.

The Bureau of Environmental Services held fundraising events that raised over \$500 respectively, including the cake walk and yard sale, a book fair, and the SCC Talent Show which was a special event, held at the RSA Activity Center, featuring stellar talents such as Tina Turner (aka Sherry Bradley) and her back-up singers,



SCC Tower Coordinators shown with State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson are, left to right, Katherine Dixon Hert, Kathy Smith, Vanessa Mitchell, Patrice Anderson, Shenell Fuller, Pat Thomas, Sherry Bradley, Knoxye Williams, Bonnie Blue, Susan Bland, Mary Frazier, Darwina Johnson and Mary Pettway.

Aretha Franklin (Zandra Harris) and Diana Ross (Charita Morris). Gina Smith, Crystal Jones, Janis Pritchett, Justin George, the Blues Brothers (Steve McDaniel and Jimmy Coles) performed to an enthusiastic audience.

Jenni Guerry of Public Health Area IX (Ruth Underwood, Administrator) accepted the Award of Excellence Trophy for area participation in the campaign. Patrice Anderson of Health Provider Standards (Rick Harris, Director) accepted the Award of Excellence Trophy for state participation.

continued on page 5

APHA Recognizes Woolbright

What do statisticians at Harvard, Yale, Columbia and the Alabama Department of Public Health have in common? A colleague from each university and the department received one of the 2008 Statistics Section Awards of the American Public Health Association.

Albert Woolbright, Ph.D., director of the Statistical Analysis Division of the Center for Health Statistics, was presented the Government Statistics Award at the association's 136th Annual Meeting Oct. 29 in San Diego. This award was given "For his dedication to the study of maternal and child health through the analysis, interpretation

and reporting of mortality and risk factor data at the state level, and his leadership role in the Alabama vital statistics reporting system."

"Public Health Without Borders" was the theme of the conference. The American Public Health Association aims to protect all Americans and their communities from preventable, serious health threats and strives to assure community-based health promotion and disease prevention activities and preventive health services are universally accessible in the United States. APHA represents a broad array of health providers, educators, environmentalists, policymakers and health officials at all levels working both within and

outside governmental organizations and educational institutions. More information is available at www.apha.org



Albert Woolbright is shown with the plaque he received from the American Public Health Association.

Mobile County Health Department Offers Flu Shots at Polling Sites



Helping with the VAX THE VOTE clinic in Mount Vernon Nov. 4 are Gladys Young, Denise Peele, Sharron Brown, Leah Fulkerson and Susie Simmons.

As Mobile County voters went to the polls Nov. 4 to help pick a new president, the Mobile County Health Department had flu shot clinics set up at two area voting precincts. One was at the Toulminville Branch of the Mobile Public Library and the other was at the Mount Vernon Community Center.

"It was something to try to make our community healthier and hopefully prevent the flu," said Dr. Bernard Eichold, health officer for Mobile County. Eichold got the idea to combine vaccinations with voting while attending an Alabama Department of Public Health meeting in Montgomery. He said he is always looking for ways to help the public make staying well a priority.

By DAVID MANN

Alabama Department of Public Health

Mission

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

Value Statement

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

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

Alabama's Health

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- Donald E. Williamson, M.D. State Health Officer
- Jim McVay, Dr. P. A. Director, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease
- Arrol Sheehan, M.A. Editor
- Takenya S. Taylor, J.D. Contributing Editor
- Noelle Ahmann Graphic Designer

Resolve to be HEALTHIER in 2009!

The following article is reprinted from the January/February 2009 issue of HealthWatch, a publication of the Alabama State Employees' Insurance Board, (Issue 1, Volume 17).

2009 brings the first year implementation of the SEIB's HealthWatch Wellness Discount Premium program. A new \$25 monthly premium will be assessed to all active State employees beginning Jan. 1, 2010. However, a \$25 discount will be offered to offset this premium if you participate in a SEIB sponsored health screening or have screening results certified to the SEIB by your physician. You can see the health screening form that will be used on our web site at www.alseib.org.

State employees have several different options for obtaining a free screening:

- State-wide worksite screenings conducted by the Alabama Department of Public Health and the SEIB. These screenings will

be scheduled at more than 600 worksites on a first come, first served basis. A schedule of these screenings is available on our web site. (www.alseib.org)

- County Health Departments throughout Alabama will provide screenings to state employees at no charge. You can schedule an appointment and get a listing of county health departments by going to our web site. (www.alseib.org)
- SEIB Wellness nurses will be providing screenings to active State employees on the first floor of the new RSA Headquarters Building at 201 South Union St. in Montgomery. Screenings will be available Monday through Friday, from 8:30 to 4 p.m. Appointments can be made on the SEIB web site or you may walk in.

If you choose to use your private physician for a screening, normal copays for an office

visit and lab fees will apply. Your physician must complete, sign and return the SEIB screening form to our office by Nov. 30, 2009. This form may be downloaded from our web site. (www.alseib.org)

Components of the FREE HealthWatch Worksite Screening:

The overall purpose of a wellness screening is to provide you with an assessment of your health, make recommendations for changes and/or treatment if necessary. You will be evaluated on the following readings: blood pressure, total cholesterol to include HDL, LDL, and Triglyceride levels, blood glucose level and Body Mass Index. If you are determined to be at risk, you will be provided with a copay waiver voucher to visit your private physician.

For your participation in the HealthWatch Worksite Screening you will receive a \$25 a month premium discount, starting January 1, 2010.

Conecuh County Educates Through 'Fun Day'

The Conecuh County Health Department recently held a Community Outreach "Fun Day" to provide education to the public regarding services offered. Several stations were utilized that included program information detailing health department services. In addition to service information, attendees were treated with games, gifts, blood pressure checks, face painting and refreshments. Santa Claus (Ben Peters) even took time out of his hectic holiday schedule to stop by and visit with the children. Shown are front row, left to right, Julie Salter, Carmen Cooper Davis, Whitney Hampton; back row left to right, Tina Findley, Avis Whitworth, Mary Arnold, Jean Brawner, Hayden Kelley.



Public Health Area 8 Administrator Takes Stand on Clean Indoor Air

Under the leadership of Public Health Area 8 Administrator James Martin, all PHA 8 county health departments are transitioning to smoke-free campuses. To protect the health of staff, visitors and clients entering the buildings, all indoor areas and 50 feet from all entrances are now smoke-free. PHA 8 includes health departments in Autauga, Bullock, Chilton, Elmore, Lee, Macon, Montgomery and Russell counties. Martin said he hopes Public Health Area 8 serves as a model for the rest of the state.

The smoke-free policy was drafted in 2006 with the assistance of Demetra Peoples, tobacco prevention and control coordinator for PHA 8. According to Martin, providing employees who smoke with cessation services and support is a priority and an integral component of the policy. The rationale behind the transitional approach was to give employees and clients time to seek treatment and adapt to the new environment, he said. Martin said the process was based on Mobile County's implementation of a smoke-free campus.

According to Martin, most employees, clients and visitors are respectful of the policy and have

adapted quickly. Prior to the 50-foot limit, it was common to see smokers gathering near entrances at the Montgomery County Health Department. After implementation of the policy, Martin noticed that most smokers extinguished their cigarettes before leaving the parking lot. Once it became the "norm" not to smoke near the buildings, the occasional violator became the center of onlookers' attention. The policy has been self-enforcing. A smoker who forgot to extinguish his cigarette was observed quickly snuffing it out and placing the butt in his pocket, Martin said.

The next phase will be prohibiting smoking in the parking lots. Prior to this, Martin plans to conduct a campaign to educate staff, visitors and patients about the upcoming change. All will receive information packets about the Quitline, a toll-free smoking cessation service from the Alabama Department of Public Health.

This information will be distributed along with educational handouts and flyers detailing the new policy and effective date. All clients coming in for appointments will receive the packet of information. Clients may visit the



Public Health Area 8 Administrator James Martin

ADPH web site, www.adph.org/tobacco, for more information about cessation and community programs, as well as a listing of cities with smoke-free ordinances.

With education and adequate notice, Martin said he is confident smokers will adjust and PHA 8 health departments will be one step closer to becoming smoke-free campuses.

For additional information, visit www.adph.org/tobacco/ or call Susan Altman at (334) 206-2776.

By *SUSAN ALTMAN*

TEAM Academy September



Melinda Adams, Barry Ambrose, Amy Baker, Robin Barksdale, Diane Beeson, Jimmy Brown, Marsha Burroughs, Wanda Culpepper, Debbie Curran, Lee Foster, Jean Fulton, David Gray, Debra Hannah, Deborah Hoffman, Tam Horton, Tiki Hubbard, Keith Jackson, David Kimpel, Tammy Mashburn, Kerry Owens, Michele Paramore, Mildred Parker, Stacie Reed, Janice Robbins, David Rozear, Chris Sellers, Al Stone, Jane Ellen Taylor, Cyndi Tereszkiwicz, Dan Thompson, Alice Toles, Kristie Welch, Merita Wiley, Becky Wilson, Marian Woodman.

TEAM Academy October



Diane Abernathy, Alfreda Arrington, Tonya Ballard, Karen Bennefield, LeAnne Bowen, Jean Brawner, Angela Bretherick, Angela Buchanan, Kathryn Chapman, Stacy Childers, Tina Dooley, Alice Floyd, Rosemary Frost, Sharon Hawkins, Leslie Hay, Steve Hill, Donna Hooks, Rosemary Humber, Mark Jackson, Chuck Lail, Chuan-Ming Li, Tarina Moores, Stacey Neumann, Beverly Perea, Charlotte Plumb, Karen Smith, John N. Swindall, Ruth Turner, Karen Wakefield, Ellen Wells, Debra Williams, Cynthia Winsley.

Innovative Fundraisers for State Combined Charities

Public health employees from throughout the state put their hearts into many events to benefit the campaign. Pictured here are just a few of the events which also included a cake walk/indoor yard sale and a gridiron contest.

TOP LEFT Jenni Guerry (left) receives the Award for Excellence Trophy for area participation from Sherry Bradley. CENTER LEFT Proceeds from a book fair added to the total. BOTTOM LEFT LaShondra Lewis is shown at a pizza extravaganza. CENTER BELOW Participants entertained at the SCC Talent Show. BOTTOM RIGHT BELOW Tina Turner is shown with her back-up singers at the show.



HIV/AIDS has Disproportionate Impact in the South

This is the fourth in a series of articles exploring health issues that affect Alabamians, and which focus on disparities. Disparities are defined as differences in the incidence, prevalence, mortality and burden of cancer and related adverse health conditions that exist among specific population groups in the United States. These groups may be characterized by gender, age, ethnicity, education, income, social class, disability, geographic location or sexual orientation.

Where Alabama stands

Alabama reported a total of 934 Alabama residents diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in 2007. This represents the highest one-year total of reported HIV/AIDS cases by the department since implementing reporting in the 1980s.

As of Sept. 4, 2008, cumulative totals of 6,701 Human Immunodeficiency Virus infections and 9,213 Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome cases have been reported to the department since reporting began in 1987.

The HIV/AIDS Surveillance Branch reports the combined total of reported HIV/AIDS in Alabama is 15,909. African Americans represent 26 percent of the state's population; however, 63.3 percent (10,076) of all reported HIV/AIDS cases in Alabama are from this group. African American males represent 44.1 percent (7,010) of all HIV/AIDS cases reported, while African American females represent 19.3 percent (3,066) of all HIV/AIDS cases reported.

HIV/AIDS cases in African Americans are reported in these risk factor categories: Men Who Have Sex With Men (33.6 percent), Injecting Drug Use (12.3 percent), Heterosexual (35.3 percent), Men Who Have Sex with Men/

Injecting Drug Use (4.7 percent), Maternal Transmission (0.9 percent), Transfusion (0.1 percent), Hemophilia (0.2 percent) and Undetermined (13 percent).

Southern States Manifesto

A recent report details the rising rates of both HIV infections and AIDS deaths in the South. The document, ***Southern States Manifesto: Update 2008***, was developed by the Southern AIDS Coalition (SAC) to increase national focus on the crisis that the HIV/AIDS epidemic has become in this region. Jane Cheeks, Alabama State AIDS Director and one of the founders of the SAC, states that the Coalition believes that everyone who is HIV-positive or has any form of sexually transmitted disease has a right to access a range of health care and necessary support services to achieve and maintain optimal health regardless of gender, sexual orientation, geographic location, economic condition, race or social status.

Among the findings released in the Manifesto at a news conference July 21 were the following:

- Throughout the rest of the country from 2001 to 2005, the number of deaths from AIDS decreased, but continued to increase in the South.
- Of the 15 states with the highest rates of new HIV infections, nine (60 percent) are in the South.
- Additionally, of the 20 metropolitan areas with the highest AIDS case rates in 2006, 16 (80 percent) are in the South. The South leads the nation in AIDS cases and rates in cities of all sizes.

- Over half (52 percent) of blacks living with AIDS and 58 percent of new AIDS cases reported in 2006 among blacks occurred in the South; yet blacks represent approximately 19 percent of the South's population.
- The South has the highest number of adults and adolescents living with and dying from AIDS in the United States. Through 2006, 52 percent of the reported, estimated, living HIV cases, and 41 percent of the reported, estimated living AIDS cases were from the South.
- Prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS are further complicated by the high prevalence of HIV-infected individuals living in rural areas. Southern states comprise 65 percent of all AIDS cases among rural populations.

On a positive note, Alabama's Legislature created the first state-funded HIV support services program and expanded its AIDS drug assistance program.

The Mobile Press Register hailed this action as "bold, important" in an editorial but says this may not be enough because the South receives less federal funding and private funding than do states in other regions. The July 30 editorial concludes, "Huge challenges remain for the fight against HIV/AIDS, but government agencies and the private sector can commit to expanding the battle. If they don't fight harder, the growing problem of HIV infections could become overwhelming for Alabama and other Southern states."

For additional information call the Division of HIV/AIDS toll free 1-800-228-0469.

Healthy Restaurants in Pike County Rewarded

Steps to HealthierAL, Southeast Alabama Region (SAR) created a new program called the Steps Restaurant Award. This award is given to restaurants within the community that encourage healthier options and provide healthier environments for their customers. Steps based this program on a similar program in Jefferson County, Alabama. Qualifications a participating restaurant must meet include: earn a health score of 93 or above, provide nutritional analysis of its food, offer menu item substitutions, offer condiments on the side, and promote healthy menu items. The participating restaurants receive a plaque, a banner (to be displayed outside of the restaurant), publicity in the Troy Messenger, and a dry erase board and stand to display healthy choices of the day or week.

What is the public health problem?

29.5 percent of adults in Alabama report that they do not engage in any physical activity. The national average is 22 percent.

Alabama has the third highest rate of adult obesity at 29.4 percent and the 11th highest rate of overweight youths (ages 10-17) at 16.7 percent in the nation.

Diabetes is the sixth leading cause of death for Alabamians.

Diabetes is the leading cause of adult blindness, kidney failure, and non-traumatic amputations in the country.

Alabama ranks fifth for diabetes with a state rate of 9.3 percent of diabetic adults compared to 7.4 percent in the U.S.

How is Steps responding?

Partnering with the Pike County environmentalist for support and publicity of the award and to make sure participating restaurants understand the questionnaire would not affect their quarterly health inspection score.

Providing assistance to the restaurant in completing the questionnaire.

Providing suggestions on ways to improve its questionnaire score.

Providing a sticker decal, banner, plaque, dry erase board and stand, and an article in the local newspaper indicating it is a healthy restaurant.

What is the health impact?

Increased community awareness with regard to nutrition.

Visibility of healthier items at the participating restaurant.

Systems change for the participating restaurant.

Why is this program working?

Evidence suggests that providing information and practical strategies related to good nutrition will lead to an increase in knowledge about healthy nutrition and an increase in healthy eating behaviors.

Family Thanks WIC, Other Staff in Marengo County

Marengo County Health Department,

We just wanted to thank you for all your support and kindness this year. We have been WIC participants for our son (and during my pregnancy), and are so appreciative of all the benefits we've received. I suppose many people (not enough) take time to thank the people that hand out those vouchers, but we are very grateful. And each and every person I have ever dealt with at your facility was so very kind and understanding. Thank you for all that you do! Our son is thriving and will be one year old January 12th.

We appreciate you!
Brandon, Tiffani and Evan McCrory

February 2009

Retirees

The following employees retired effective Jan. 1:

- Carol Adair** - Home and Community Services
- James Brooks** - Monroe County Health Department
- Shirley Coleman** - Health Statistics
- Epsie Drewry** - Pickens County Health Department
- Diana Fendley** - Public Health Area VII
- Dorothy Harshbarger** - Health Statistics
- Kim Ingram** - Bibb County Health Department
- Judy Johnson** - Morgan County Health Department
- Dorothy Lee** - Dallas County Health Department
- Linda McGarrah** - Public Health Area III
- Gloria Miller** - Public Health Area II
- William Smith** - Mobile Laboratory
- Martha Sparks** - Lawrence County Health Department
- Lynn Williams** - Center for Emergency Preparedness

Make Sure the RSA Is Your Information Source!

Whenever you have a question about your retirement account, RSA-1 Deferred Compensation account, or PEEHIP health insurance plans, contact RSA Member Services at 877-517-0020 or 334-517-7000 with your questions to avoid receiving the wrong information. If you do rely on outside sources and are given erroneous information, you could make a mistake concerning your retirement or health insurance. Do not rely on colleagues or acquaintances for “expert” advice on your retirement and health insurance plans. It is not possible for even your personnel department to know the RSA/PEEHIP plans and regulations like our RSA counselors. Every year there are a few new retirees who did not complete their retirement application properly or selected the wrong retirement option because they did not contact the RSA for advice.

The RSA has also become increasingly aware that private, “for profit” companies are advertising they have “retirement experts” or “retirement specialists” who can advise public school teachers and state and local employees on their retirement plans. These are private companies seeking to sell financial services and, in turn, make a substantial profit from your account. They may know the plan they are marketing, but they do not know the RSA plans. If any of these private plans or their employees tell you they represent the RSA, please phone RSA Member Services at 877-517-0020 or 334-517-7000 immediately and advise us of that fact.

When you are preparing to retire, you need to gather as much information as possible in order to make good decisions about your retirement. These decisions will affect you and your family for years to come.

That is why the RSA offers two educational statewide programs for its members to receive the most reliable information about their retirement and health care benefits. These programs are entitled: Retirement Preparation Seminars (Ret Preps) and Control Your Money Game . . . You’re Not There Yet! The RSA does not hold retirement planning seminars in restaurants or hotels; there is never a charge; you will not be served dinner; and we do not have seminars at night. To attend an official RSA educational program, you will have to be registered. The registration form and schedule are posted on the RSA Web site. If you do not see a seminar listed on the RSA Web site – it is not ours! The RSA does not stand by any information given out at seminars other than the ones sponsored by the RSA. If you have a question about the validity of a retirement planning program, contact the RSA Field Services Division: 877-517-0020 or 334-517-7000.

continued on page 12



Grover Wedgeworth, left, director of the Bureau of Home and Community Services, presents a clock from the bureau to Carol Adair upon her retirement after her 25 years of service. She is shown with her husband Allen.



Concluding 43 years of service with the Center for Health Statistics, Shirley Coleman receives a certificate from Dorothy Harshbarger. Co-workers from several decades attended a reception in her honor.



Co-workers presented a suitcase to Dollie Hambrick, director of the Social Work Division, at her retirement farewell celebration Dec. 4. Arnita Shepherd is shown at left.

Dorothy Harshbarger Retires from Center for Health Statistics

With the retirement on Jan. 1 of Dorothy Harshbarger after 19 years as state registrar and director of the Center for Health Statistics, colleagues remarked that Alabama has lost both a wonderful mentor who has shared her knowledge and expertise and “a national treasure” insofar as vital records and health statistics are concerned.

Co-workers praised her as a director who put in long hours, whose door remained completely open to all, and who was always respectful and considerate. Her dream of automating vital records led to rapid changes that took many of the center’s employees from the typewriter age to high tech. This involved the mammoth task of carefully scanning all records and relocating the vault twice during her tenure.

A major achievement under Ms. Harshbarger’s leadership was the implementation of the automated ViSION System which allows certified copies of vital records to be issued through all 67 county health departments while the customer waits. This system, which permits issuance regardless of where in Alabama the event occurred, remains unique among the states. The system was fully in place by June 1996, thanks to the support of then director of Information Services Director, Leon Barwick, and other leaders.

Ms. Harshbarger always sought to find the answer to “why” through statistics and remained open to new ideas. Reginald Strickland, deputy director of the center, said, “As mathematics major, she never made a cursory review of anything and applied her investigative skill and talent to issues which arose.”

In addition to her dedication to health statistics in Alabama, Ms. Harshbarger was a recognized leader on the national level. The National Center for Health Statistics honored her service with a plaque. Ms. Harshbarger was president of the National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems and was chair of and participated in many committees such as the Education Committee, Policy Committee, Resolutions Committee and Cost Committee. She was presented the most prestigious award of NAPHSIS, the Halbert L. Dunn, M.D., Award. This award is presented to individuals in recognition of outstanding and lasting contributions to the field of vital records and health statistics on a national state and local level.



Other activities included service on the Committee to Improve the Quality of Birth and Death Data and a workshop to improve the timeliness of data transmissions to NCHS. Ms. Harshbarger served on the panel to evaluate the U.S. standard certificates of birth, death and fetal death, and she participated in the Intelligence Reform Workgroups which were developed to make recommendations on regulations for birth certificate security and processing in the wake of 9/11.

Cathy Molchan Donald, who has worked with the Center for Health Statistics since 1987, most recently as director of the Quality Assurance and Registration Division, has been appointed to fill Ms. Harshbarger’s position.

RSA Tower Mother's Room Available to Breastfeeding Moms

The Bureau of Family Health Services provides a Mother’s Room on the 13th floor of the RSA Tower in Montgomery.

“Babies who are breastfed have fewer illnesses and receive the most complete form of nutrition,” stated Chris Haag, deputy bureau director. “The Alabama Department of Public Health has taken steps to ensure we have a work environment which encourages new mothers working (or visiting) in the RSA Tower to continue breastfeeding their infants after they return to work.”

The Mother’s Room is specifically designated to help mothers continue to breastfeed after they return to work. The room includes privacy, a hospital-grade electric pump, comfortable chairs, breastfeeding information and a refrigerator to store breastmilk. All ADPH employees and others employed in the RSA Tower are welcome to use the Mother’s Room. If you would like more information, please call Michell Grainger at (334) 206-2921.



Breastfeeding Coordinator Michell Grainger is shown in the Mother's Room.

Commendations

If you would like to praise employees for their accomplishments, send letters of commendation to the State Health Officer or the employee's supervisor and a copy by e-mail to asheehan@adph.state.al.us for inclusion in this list. Four items are needed: the employee's name, work unit, name of the person making the commendation, and his or her city and state.

Diane Allen, BSN
Marengo County Health
Department
from *D.M. Russell, Jr.,
D.M.D., P.C.
Selma, Ala.*

Charlotte Detlefsen
Jenny Pope
Peggy Roberts
Hope Steadham
Tina Syphrit
Clarke County Health
Department
from *Suzanne L. Terrell
Grove Hill, Ala.*

Rachel Durden
Technical Services
from *Linda Railey
Eufaula, Ala.*

Dennis Etheredge, LBSW
Washington County Health
Department
from *Suzanne L. Terrell, LGSW
Grove Hill, Ala.*

Jimmie Guyton
Barbara Hurst
Karen Ramos
Danica Tidwell
Health Provider Standards
from *James W. Turnipseed
Fort Payne, Ala.*

Whitney Hampton, LBSW
Conecuh County Health
Department
from *Renae Carpenter
Grove Hill, Ala.*

Casandra Henderson
Center for Health Statistics
from *Charlie Culberson
Sterling Heights, Mich.
Sherida Turner
Lisman, Ala.*

Mable Jordan
Charlese Wright
Center for Health Statistics
from *Floria Hunter
Rochester, N.Y.*

Vivian Rankin
Frederick Reeves
Health Provider Standards
from *Sherry Ginn
Phenix City, Ala.*

Shelia Underwood
Health Provider Standards
from *Wyman Hamilton
Birmingham, Ala.*

Transportation Exercise Prepares for Radiological Threats

The Office of Radiation Control recently participated in Southern Exposure, a full-scale exercise which marked the culmination of the Southeast Transportation Corridor Pilot. The Oct. 28 exercise was led by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office along with other participants including the Alabama Department of Public Safety and the Alabama Fusion Center.

The training scenario began with Alabama Fusion Center receiving intelligence bulletins leading up to a stolen commercial truck carry illicit radioactive material in transit to Atlanta, Ga. Alabama Department of Public Safety detected the suspicious commercial vehicle carrying radioactive material on the Northern Boulevard in Montgomery. Immediately, Public Safety requested assistance of the

Office of Radiation Control for adjudication. While Radiation Control attempts to identify the spectrum that was received, two physicists were dispatched to the scene to assist the State Troopers. For exercise play, Radiation Control was unable to adjudicate the spectrum and requested assistance of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Joint Analysis Center. Participants were to identify the source, evaluate and respond to the potential radiological threat.

The exercise was designed to test communications, equipment, procedures and to request federal assistance through the Joint Analysis Center. The objectives were successfully completed.

The Southeast Transportation Corridor Pilot encompasses nine states and the District

of Columbia. The systems and operational concepts demonstrated are expected to provide valuable lessons learned regarding conducting preventive radiation/nuclear detection within commercial vehicle inspection operations that can be applied in other regions.



Cason Coan and Myron Riley conduct radiological testing for a during the training scenario.

Bureau of Clinical Laboratories' Director Retires After 40 Years of Service

After more than 40 years of service to the Alabama Department of Public Health, Dr. William J. Callan retired on Oct. 31, 2008. Dr. Callan began his career with the department as a student aide during the spring of 1967. He was hired as a microbiologist on June 15, 1967, and was assigned to work in the Serology Division, performing Complement Fixation (CF), Fluorescent Treponema Antibody (FTA), and Hemmagglutination Inhibition (HI). In 1970, he was promoted to and began a career in newborn screening that would define his love for assuring a normal life for Phenylketonuria (PKU) children. He was involved in many of the advances in PKU testing and many children owe their normal lives to this important laboratory testing.

In 1971, he moved to the University of Georgia to work on his Ph.D. in microbiology. His emphasis was on scanning electron microscopy (ESM) and visualizing bacterial colonies with the ESM. After receiving his Ph.D., he returned to Alabama and the department to resume his work in PKU and other inborn errors of metabolism, including abnormal hemoglobinopathies.

On Nov. 21, 1974, he was appointed Assistant Laboratory Director under Dr. James Holston. During this time, he began working on computers and his life-long love of the Apple™ computer began. He remained involved in the newborn screening arena, serving on the Neonatal Metabolic Screening Committee

of the Association of State and Territorial Public Health Laboratory Directors (now the Association of Public Health Laboratories, APHL) and later, the APHL Laboratory Management and Information Systems Committee. He was instrumental in developing and beta testing Laboratory Information Systems for the public health arena.

In November 1987, Dr. Callan was appointed Laboratory Director, where he has served admirably until his retirement. During these years, Dr. Callan participated in various studies in Newborn Screening and Human Immunodeficiency Virus, co-authoring papers on each of these subjects. He wrote three papers titled Newborn Screening Laboratory Concerns (1987), Alabama Newborn Hemoglobinopathy Screening Program (1990), and The Alabama Newborn Hemoglobinopathy Follow-up Program (1990), all published in *Advances in Newborn Screening*, the professional journal for newborn screening.

In his 21 years as laboratory director, Dr. Callan oversaw many changes in the State Laboratory. He says his biggest accomplishment has been the implementation of a management structure within the Bureau of Clinical Laboratories (BCL). Each division is structured with a manager, supervisor and microbiologists. Many of the managers, along with Dr. Callan, attended and completed the Certified Public Manager Program offered

at Auburn University Montgomery. He also oversaw the implementation of the computerization of the BCL. To take a completely manual paper system to computer-based information system was a tall order and he led the Laboratory through this transition with flying colors. The Laboratory is now in the process of converting to its second computer system, moving to an Internet-based system to accommodate two regional public health laboratories and all 67 county health departments in Alabama.

Dr. Callan, his wife, Sharon, and their two children began attending Frazer United Methodist Church in Montgomery upon their return from Georgia. He has been the lighting director for Special Productions for many years. He and his wife are members of the Koinonia Sunday School Class. He and Sharon have three grandchildren and live in Millbrook.

Dr. Callan's dedication to public health in general and laboratory services specifically has been appreciated throughout the ADPH and the state. The employees of the Bureau of Clinical Laboratories send their best wishes for a wonderfully relaxing retirement!

Submitted by Jeannine Parker



Employees Enjoy Holiday Open House

Voters selected these winners in the decorating contest: First place, Children's Health Insurance Program; second place, Home and Community Services; third place, Family Health Services, room 1300; fourth place, Family Health Services, room 1350. Shown here is an inventive replica of the RSA Tower in the Office of Facilities Management.

Robert Daniel, a Building Construction Specialist in Technical Services, applied his love of architecture (and cookies!) by designing and building this replica which was displayed at the holiday open house.

Retirement, continued from page 8

The Retirement Preparation Seminars or Ret Preps are for ERS and TRS members within five years of retirement eligibility. These full-day seminars are comprehensive in nature and will give members a “heads up” on decision-making. You will be provided information on Social Security from a Social Security representative; retirement transitions; your actual retirement plan explained in detail; DROP; and the RSA-1 Deferred Compensation Plan. You will also be given an estimate of your benefits prepared by the RSA benefit counselors. There is ample opportunity to ask questions of the several presenters in attendance.

Due to the overwhelming response to the Ret Preps and due to much feedback from

members saying they needed this information twenty years ago, the RSA now offers a second educational program. Control Your Money Game. . . You’re Not There Yet! is a half-day program for all those members who are not eligible for the Ret Preps. Even if a member has just started their job, they need to attend one of these programs and get focused on the right track to a secure retirement.

In addition to these education programs, members can visit our counselors at RSA Headquarters by making an appointment with RSA Member Services at 877-517-0020 or 334-517-7000. Calling for an appointment will ensure prompt service, plus the counselors will have prepared your account information in advance of your arrival. Avoid making

mistakes with your retirement by contacting Member Services today.

Retirement planning is supposed to begin the very first day you start to work. Not many go by this rule. But you can be one who does by contacting Member Services and visiting the RSA Web site at www.rsa-al.gov for more information about your retirement system.

Prepared by the Communications staff of the Retirement Systems of Alabama. To have your questions answered in “Preparing for Retirement”, please address them to Michael Pegues, Communications, Retirement Systems of Alabama, P.O. Box 302150, Montgomery, Ala. 36130-2150. Please visit our Web site at www.rsa-al.gov.

Calendar of Events



March 2

Short Term Birth Interval/Pre-conceptual Health, 2-4 p.m.

For more information contact Annie Vosel, (334) 206-2959.



March 11

ADPH In-service for Nurses, 8-9 a.m.
For more information contact Thresa Dix, (334) 206-3377.

Diabetes, 1-3 p.m.
For more information contact Debra Griffin (334) 206-2066.

March 26-27

Alabama Public Health Association Educational Conference, Asbury Hotel and Suites, Mobile

Register at www.alphassoc.org.

April 6-12

National Public Health Week 2009

For more information visit www.nphw.org.