

Hometown News

"Solutions Through Leadership & Teamwork"

APRIL 2004

NE Region

Hometown Health Coalition is up and Running in Greene County

The Crowley's Ridge Rural Health Coalition is working full steam. In January the Coalition hired Patti Reesor as Program Director, thanks to funding through a Arkansas Rural Delta Network Implementation Grant. By the end of May the Coalition plans to have a Medicine Assistance Program up and running. This program will be available for all members of the Greene County Community and will assist with prescription medication costs. The Coalition also opened an office which will serve as the headquarters for both the Medicine Assistance Program and the Coalition. The Coalition has acquired several grants and is



Pictured above: Lee Presley, HHI Leader Greene County with Attorney General Mike Beebe

looking forward to conducting the Youth Risk Behavior Survey in the fall which will provide data to further its grants and program development. CRRHC's Program Director is a dedicated educator and has already started providing seminars. The most recent was at the Senior's Information Fair on April 13th at the Community Center in Paragould.

The Senior Information Fair was very well attended with 200 senior citizens and others gathering information from over 32 agencies and providers. Arkansas Methodist Medical Center provided glucose testing, cholesterol screenings, BMI measurements and lung function test. AMMC screened 143 persons. The Greene County Health Unit provided free Tetanus shots, blood pressure screenings, and a table dedicated to nutrition and healthy eating information. Visitors to the table received fruit and boxes of orange juice that were donated by local merchants. As an added bonus Attorney General Mike Beebe stopped by the

Walk Across Lawrence County

The Lawrence County Healthcare Coalition was granted the ADH mini grant to encourage exercise among the residents of Lawrence County. The Coalition is Challenging Residents of Lawrence

County to participate in a virtual walking tour of Lawrence County. The coalition will be giving away 100 free pedometers and walking logs. Prizes will also be given for those who: walk the most miles,

lose the most weight, and have the most daily exercise. The Challenge starts May 1st and goes to June 30th.

Marlene Coffman

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Independence County Wins 2004 NE Arkansas Public Health Hero Award for “Walk the Walk to Wellness”

(LITTLE ROCK, AR) At a State Capitol press conference on April 5th, Batesville’s Linda Hidy, RN and former chairperson of the Independence County Wellness Coalition, received the Northeast Arkansas 2004 Public Health Hero award for Independence County Hometown Wellness Coalition’s “Walk the Walk to Wellness” program.

Angela Dugger, CHES & Public Health Educator for the Arkansas Department of Health NE Region, who submitted the winning nomination wrote, “Walk the Walk to Wellness is putting Independence County on the road to fitness”. The 2004 Walk will be the third annual Walk event for the county. It will run concurrently with National Employee Health and Fitness Day on May 19th. Associated activities include the adult Out to Lunch walking program and the “Kids March Into May”, a school based physical activity and nutrition program.

Local businesses, industries, educators and corporate sponsors work in concert to sponsor, fund and offer support needed to ensure Walk success.

In addition to Independence County’s “Walk the Walk to Wellness” the following were honored: Patty Grove (NW AR), Lincoln County Hometown Health Network, Wellness Subcommittee of the Quality of Life Coalition for the “Walk Across Polk County” initiative, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) for their ban on smoking at their main campus, education centers and aging centers statewide and to the Senate and House Chair of the Health, Welfare and Labor Committee Senator Jack Critcher

and Representative Jay Bradford for their work on public health issues.

Throughout the week of April 5-11, public health providers across the state will be holding special events and celebrating Arkansas Public Health Week. This year’s theme, **On the Road to Fitness: Arkansans Move to Meet the Challenge**, captures the elements that are vital in public health today. Obesity, physical inactivity and tobacco abuse are some of the state’s most pressing health problems. Health professionals and communities are working statewide to deal with these critical health issues and achieve a healthier Arkansas.

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) is partnering with the Arkansas Public Health Association, Arkansas Center for Health Improvement, Stamp Out Smoking, Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) College of Public Health and UAMS Regional Programs, Kroger, Clear Mountain and Mountain Valley Spring Water for this special week.

Arkansas public health professionals have been involved in many successes over the past year. They include:

*Peer Exercise Program Promotes Independence (PEPPI) is an evidence-based physical activity program specifically designed for older adults to increase and maintain their level of fitness and independence. The AR PEPPI Program will be implemented in ten senior centers in central Arkansas.

*The Arkansas Arthritis Health Program implemented an arthritis and physical activity promotional campaign called “Physical Activity, the Arthritis Pain Reliever.”

*The Governor’s Council on Fitness is coordinating the 2004 Arkansas Fitness Challenge, a three-month worksite wellness program that encourages 30 minutes of physical activity a day.

*The WIC Program is training health professionals in Health Department local units to identify childhood obesity and counsel parents in appropriate lifestyle changes, treatment and prevention.

*Act 1220 of 2003 created the Child Health Advisory Committee to address childhood obesity. The Committee is developing statewide nutrition and physical activity standards to be implemented in Arkansas schools.

*The 5-A-Day Program encourages Arkansans to adopt a heart healthy lifestyle through good nutrition.

*ADH, in partnership with the Department of Parks and Tourism, established the Trails for Life Grant Program. This program provides funds for grants to communities through the Tobacco Settlement proceeds for health and fitness trails or other fitness improvements.

*The Cardiovascular Health Program partnered with the Department of Human Services’ Division on Aging to provide pedometers, training, and technical assistance to Senior Wellness Centers’ “Stepping into Healthy Aging” programs.

*The Tobacco Prevention and Education Program (TPEP) funded 34 community program grants to develop and implement statewide tobacco control and prevention activities. In addition, TPEP partners with the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care and Community Health Centers to offer smoking cessation education and counseling services.

*Currently, the College of Public Health has 190 students. Forty-five of the students are employed by



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ADH.

*The College of Public Health moved to a new building located on the UAMS campus last fall. The building will be dedicated on Wednesday, April 7 at 1:30 p.m.

*In December 2003, the first student graduated from the College of Public Health with a Masters of Public Health degree.

*The College of Public Health formed two interdisciplinary programs to deal exclusively with two of the three greatest health threats for Arkansans in the 21st century: the Obesity/Physical Inactivity program and the Tobacco program.

Call your local health unit to find out about activities in your community.

Angela Dugger



Pictured above, front row: Dennis Moore, Glenda Verkler, Sonia Nix, Angela Dugger, and Linda Hidy
Back row: Connie Meeks, Blue Ann Ewe, Ruth Ann Harp, and Dr. Boozman

Meth Awareness Workshop Held in Izard County

The Izard County Hometown Health Coalition held a Meth Awareness Workshop on Friday 12, 2004, from 5:30 to 8:30 at the Miller Building Lecture Hall at Ozarka College. It included the following individual break out sessions: "What Does Meth Smell Like?", "Current Drug Information" for the General

Audience, presented by an official with the 16th Judicial Drug Task Force. "What Would Happen?" a session for first responders, firefighters, and other emergency professionals presented by Officer Scott Russell, 16th Judicial Drug Task Force. "How do we Protect our Children? Information for teachers,

counselors, principals, and superintendents presented by Margaret Morrison with the Prevention Resource Center. The workshop was free and open to the public. It was well attended by over 80 people of all ages from the targeted audience areas plus the community at large. The Coalition was well pleased

with the turn out. They also gave surveys to attendee and asked them to join the coalition and received some positive responses. Discussion was held with the attendees on future workshops for the county.

Treva Engelhardt

Smokefree New York City -- One Year Later Restaurant/Bar Employment Highest in Over a Decade

New York City, March 30, 2004-- Today, New York City celebrated its one year anniversary of smoke-free workplace legislation. By every measure, the City's law has been good for health, good for business, and popular with residents. Here are the highlights of a report issued by four city agencies (finance, health, small business, and economic development):

- Employment in NYC's restaurant/bar industry is the highest in over a decade
- Business tax receipts in restaurants and bars are up 8.7%
- Bar permits/licenses are up by 234

- Bar/restaurant air quality is significantly better (cotinine pollution levels are down 85%)
- Popularity of the law is higher than that of the New York Yankees
- Compliance is almost 100% (97% of 22,000 establishment inspected had posted NO SMOKING signs, removed ashtrays, and had no one smoking)

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg indicated that he was pleased by the positive economic results, but stressed that the law was passed to protect workers from a known Group A carcinogen (i.e. a substance known to cause cancer in humans).

To send a "thank you" to NYC's leaders, go to www.smokefree.net/NYC

To win smokefree air where YOU live, go to www.smokefree.net/alerts.php

Joseph W. Cherner
"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead

Submitted by: Angela Dugger



Change in Leadership for Independence County Wellness Coalition

At the April meeting of the Independence Co. Hometown Wellness Coalition, Dennis Moore, Pharm.D., Director of Pharmacy Services at White River Medical Center (WRMC), accepted the nomination of the Coalition Planning Committee to become the second only Chairperson for the organization. Linda Hidy, R.N., Ark. Eastman Division, stepped down after three years of service. Linda was honored at the April meeting with a special luncheon provided by WRMC on behalf of the Coalition Membership. She received a beautiful, free-standing glass presentation award from the Coalition and a Certificate of Recognition for her outstanding leadership of an Innovative Arkansas Health Initiative from Fay Boozman, M.D., Director Ark. Department of Health. Linda will continue to serve the Coalition as Past-Chairperson in the capacity of Public Relations Director and member of the Worksite Wellness Committee.

In-coming Coalition Chairperson, Dennis Moore, is an Independence County native, son of T.R. and Grace Moore, of the Huff

Community and 1964 graduate of Pleasant Plains High School. Over the last 30 years, Dennis has pursued his career of Pharmacy from Arkansas to Atlanta, Georgia as Assistant Professor of Clinical Pharmacy to North Carolina where he was awarded North Carolina Hospital Pharmacist of the Year, and back to Arkansas as Director of Pharmacy Services at WRMC. Dennis was recently honored as, 2003 Pharmacy Manager of the Year in Arkansas. Through his varied positions in the medical arena, he has gained a unique perspective on what ails America.

When asked for his philosophy on health and wellness, Moore says, "With all the scientific discoveries that can assist in keeping us healthy, the greatest threat to our health is our behaviors. Tobacco use, as well as eating and exercise habits have some of the most dramatic impacts on increasing sickness and premature death. It is my hope that we can learn—as a county—to become involved in behaviors that improve our health and wellness. Linda Hidy, and other volunteers, have made a wonderful beginning in the involvement of citizens, health professionals, industry

and community leaders in the Hometown Wellness Coalition. It is my hope that we can expand, and continue to develop that spirit of cooperation and progress to make our community a healthier one. After residing out of state for three decades, I was pleased to return and find such a viable health care community. The infrastructure is here and now we just need to develop our cooperative spirit and make health and wellness a strong community goal. It is my hope that we can develop programs that will allow every person in the community to feel a part in making this a healthier place. I invite all interested parties to contact us and find out how they can become involved."

The Hometown Wellness Coalition invites you to join them at their regularly scheduled meetings the second Tuesday of each month at the Citizen's Bank Annex starting at 1PM. Make Health and Wellness a Top Priority for Life.

Angela Dugger

Calendar of Events

May 11th - Cooperative Extension's 'Body Walk' will be in Fulton County

May 12th - Izard County Consolidated Elementary School (k-3rd grade) will host the Cooperative Extension's 'Body Walk'

May 19th 'Walk The Walk To Wellness' - Independence County Hometown Wellness Coalition

June 8th Jimmy Parks Presentation - UACCB (Batesville) 'Burn Prevention Seminar' Hosted by Independence County Tobacco Free Initiative

August 10-11th Nutrition and Physical Activity Conference at the State House Convention Center in Little Rock



Hometown Health

Mission

Provide leadership, guidance, and technical assistance to the local HHI leader to develop Hometown Health Improvement Initiatives that are locally owned and controlled and are working to improve the health of the citizens. Provide Hometown Health Improvement Leadership in the region.

Vision

Empowered local communities taking ownership of health problems and working to identify and implement solutions that improve the health of citizens.

