

# ALABAMA'S

A PUBLICATION OF THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

# HEALTH

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## Center for Health Statistics offers a new vision

**T**he Center for Health Statistics is improving the current system used to issue vital records throughout the state. Soon it will be even quicker and easier than it already is.

Health Statistics has more than 15 million vital records which include births, deaths, marriages and divorces. Over 1,000 requests a day are made for copies of these records which are collected from several sources across the state, such as hospitals, funeral homes, coroners, and probate and circuit courts. Once a record is received at the center, an image of the record is stored on an optical disk so that copies can easily be issued via the center's ViSION System.

In 1996 the original ViSION (Vital Statistics Image Oriented Network) System was implemented statewide. This system allows copies of vital records to be transmitted to any county health department in the state within a matter of minutes.

"We are the only state in the country that is able to send an image of the actual vital record to any county health department while the person waits," said Reginald Strickland, Deputy Director of the Center for Health Statistics.

The process is simple. An applicant goes to the county health department and completes an application for a vital record. The county registrar is responsible for reviewing the application to make sure the individual is entitled to a copy of the record. If so, the registrar faxes the application to the Center using a dedicated fax machine. The application is then received by the computer in the Center and the search for the record begins.



It was a team effort between Computer Systems' staff and Health Statistics to implement the new system. Pictured from left to right are Leslie Hay, James Coley, Crystal Steen, Gene Hill and Cathy Molchan. Not pictured is David Rozear.

An image of the application appears on the computer screen of a searcher in the Center. An initial search for the record is made. If the record is found, the searcher is able to press the "print" key and issue the requested number of copies. The computer system automatically sends the copies to the fax machine that initiated the request. The copies then print on safety paper loaded in the fax machine. The registrar is responsible for reviewing the record to be sure it is the correct record. If it is, the registrar places a raised seal on the record and gives it to  
*ViSION.....continued on page 2*

the customer.

Not all records are easily found. If the initial searcher does not find the record, the application is sent electronically to a second searcher who performs a more intense search for the record. However, over 90 percent of all records are found by the initial searcher.

The current system uses phone lines to connect the fax machines to the Center. "Because of this, the system can be compromised by bad weather which may cause phone line problems. This may result in poor quality documents that must then be re-faxed to the county. The new equipment we are installing in the county health departments will eliminate the use of phone lines," said Cathy Molchan, Director of the Quality Assurance and Registration Division for the Center.

The new equipment will provide faster and more reliable service by using the department's Wide Area Network (WAN). The fax machines currently in use in the counties will be replaced with scanners attached to laser printers. Instead of faxing the application to the Center, the registrar will scan the application in and it will be transmitted to the Center via the WAN.

The process for searching the records at the Center will remain the same. Once the record is located, it will be printed on safety paper located in the printer at the county health departments. Because phone lines are no longer

used, records will be issued much faster because there is no longer a fax machine which has to "call" the Center and wait for an answer before transmitting the application to the Center. In addition, the Center's computer no longer has to "call" the county's fax machine. The records will print on the printer in the county almost as quickly as they print on a printer located in the Center.

The new technology was piloted successfully in Montgomery County in April and Mobile County in May. On July 18 the new equipment was installed in the Birmingham vital records office of Jefferson County. The remainder of the state will begin getting the new equipment in August.

Staff with the Computer Systems Center such as James Coley, Crystal Steen, Leslie Hay and Gene Hill and his team play an integral role in installing the new equipment and switching the counties to the new technology. "We could not do it without them," said Ms. Molchan.

*By TAKENYA STOKES*

## 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..

## Russian doctor visits State Lab for tuberculosis training

**D**r. Evgenia Gorbunova, a Russian doctor, will be doing hands on observation at the Bureau of Clinical Laboratories at the Alabama Department of Public Health. This will help her handle the tuberculosis epidemic in her country. Dr. Gorbunova, who is from Kemerovo in West Siberia, will study lab methods and procedures for tuberculosis. Dr. Gorbunova hopes that the new techniques and procedures she will learn at the state lab will help her improve the functioning in her own lab in Kemerovo which is currently under construction.

The State of Alabama's TB program is an excellent model to study. The program has a system of 11 different areas, each with a TB manager. The managers meet once every other month to discuss issues concerning tuberculosis. In Alabama there is also plenty of communication among the epidemiologists, laboratory and the medical council, which contributes to controlling the disease. Dr. Gorbunova hopes to learn from this process to aid in her own country's work with TB.

The visit by Dr. Gorbunova is a result of a program at the Gorgas Tuberculosis Initiative at UAB. The Initiative addresses the problem of tuberculosis in countries with high disease burden such as Siberia. The Initiative allows persons such as Dr. Gorbunova to receive training and education so that they can better handle tuberculosis in their area.

It is Gorbunova's first visit to America and she says

that she has had a wonderful time so far. "Everyone seems so friendly and willing to help me. I feel like a princess here," Dr. Gorbunova said. She hopes that the renovation on the lab in her native country will be progress quickly so that they can address the TB problem as soon as possible. These are just the first steps in what she hopes will be a big start an innovative laboratory.

"I look forward to the Kemerovo lab being completed," said Dr. Gorbunova.



Dr. Evgenia Gorbunova

By TAKENYA STOKES

## Farmer's market and health fair comes to Wilcox County

**I**t was a day of information and health in Pine Apple on June 25. Many came out to celebrate the opening of the East Wilcox Farmer's Market and participate in the health fair.

This was the second year of operation for the East Wilcox Farmer's Market. It is a project that began last year sponsored by the Alabama Department of Public Health's Cardiovascular Health Program. It was an environmental intervention aimed at making fresh fruits and vegetables more readily available to citizens in the remote area of Wilcox County. Enthusiastic community acceptance led to the market being included this year in the Alabama Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program. Low-income seniors in the area are given coupons to redeem for fresh produce at the market.

Farmers brought fruits and vegetables to sell and were

excited about the day after a postponement earlier in the year. County Extension Agent Michael Oglesby opened the farmer's market up and talked of new plans to make farming even more efficient in the area.

"We're trying to train farmers how to use new methods of farming to increase their crops with even less land," said Oglesby.

Donald Stone, a member of Partners in Progress, a local community organization in Pine Apple that addresses social and economic conditions in the town, also helped in the opening of the Farmer's Market.

"Our program tries to fill the needs of the community. We help rich or poor, black or white. The residents have been looking forward to the opening of the Farmer's Market for a while," said Stone.

*Farmer's.....continued on page 5*

# Lifecare supervisor alerts patient to hazardous gas leak

Walker County Lifecare Supervisor Mary Ann Seel ordinarily checks on her patients about once every 60 days, but she felt compelled to go by to see one of her favorite patients in the Options program around 3:30 p.m. on June 25, even though it was a little ahead of schedule. She really enjoys the company of older people and had lost her father several months ago.

When she arrived at the patient's house in rural Oakman she suspected he had left for a vacation with his children because she could see his car was covered. Yet she went ahead and knocked on the widower's door, and she was pleased when he greeted her warmly, invited her in, and suggested they look at some pictures.

They walked into the hall near the heating unit and Ms. Seel smelled the faint odor of gas. She questioned the patient about it, but he said he didn't smell it, nor did homemaker aide Sharon Clark. But when they walked past the heating unit and into the living room where there were gas logs in the fireplace, Ms. Seel's nose confirmed there was indeed a gas leak.

Ms. Seel insisted they evacuate the house at once; she flagged down a water meter reader who referred her to the gas company and they called Alagasco workmen who traveled the 13 miles from Jasper to check on the suspected leak. In the meanwhile they sat in some chairs in the shady yard. Her suspicions were confirmed, because the technician found a severe gas leak that would have resulted in an explosion and fire if ignited. It seemed a pipe beneath the house had simply disintegrated.

An interesting twist to this lifesaving story is that the patient is the father of Public Health Administrative Officer Ed Davidson of Montgomery. The son wanted to ensure that Ms. Seel was recognized for her heroic actions.

Davidson stated in a commendation, "I am convinced that Ms. Seel at the very least saved my dad's house and, in all probability, his life. I've always been a fan of our homecare programs and this only brings home to me how important they are to our parents, grandparents and someday ourselves. I've worked with Ms Seel in the past in arranging dad's care and have been impressed with her good judgment, work ethic and compassion. Now I am in her debt for this extraordinary service to my father. Keep up the good work."

Ms. Seel said, "I just call it all in a day's work. Maybe it was my Guardian Angel or his that called me to go to his house that day. I'm just so glad I went."

Carolyn Haddock, Ms. Seel's supervisor, added, "It's

just Mary Ann—if there's a need in the home she'll take care of it."

Just a month earlier Ms. Seel was recognized as the winner of the Anne M. Smith Award for Home Health. Grover Wedgeworth, director of the Bureau of Home and Community Services, said, "We laud Ms. Seel's actions. Her

professionalism and caring attitude are exemplary and she continuously

has a positive effect on all Lifecare clients that she has the opportunity to serve. It is no small coincidence that she was named the Homecare Nurse of the Year just prior to this incident." (See related story on page 6.)



Photo courtesy of Kay Mitchell

Quick action on the part of Mary Ann Seel helped prevent a possible explosion at the home of Lifecare patient Reuben E. Davidson in Oakman recently.

## Retirees

The following employees retired effective Aug. 1:

*Judith Mitchell* - Health Care Facilities

*Carolee Warneke* - Cleburne County Health Department

# Montgomery County Health Department celebrates Teen Pregnancy Prevention Day

The Montgomery County Health Department celebrated Teen Pregnancy Prevention Day 2002 on May 8 by wearing the colors of red, black and white. In addition, a contest was held to name the Montgomery teen program. An entry by Donna Jordan was selected because judges felt it most symbolized the teen program. The winning title is MY LIFE (Montgomery Youth Learning Interventions For Empowerment).

Ms. Jordan, a newly employed social worker for the MCHD CAP (Community Access Program), submitted her entry with the following explanation: "My suggestion was conceptualized from hearing a common phrase most youth said; 'This is my life and I want to make my own

decisions.'"

Montgomery County kicked off the new Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program in January. This state program is designed to offer teens up to age 18 teen care coordination services. In addition to teen family planning services, the program encourages self-confidence and self-worth, education and extracurricular activities to help teens make the best choices for their future.

Door prizes were also given for employees who wore Teen Day colors. Plans are to involve teens, parents and guardians in next year's celebration.

*By MELISSA DEAN, LBSW*

## Farmer's.....continued from page 3

A health fair took place with the help of ADPH representatives and other organizations. The Diabetes Branch had an exhibit emphasizing the "ABCs of Diabetes" and distributed materials about prevention and self-management of diabetes as well as conducted blood pressure checks. The Cardiovascular Health Program distributed bags containing heart healthy information, cups and pencils. The Injury and Arthritis programs were also present to emphasize the importance of seat belt usage and how to manage arthritis. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System handed out information on their nutrition education program.

There was face painting provided for children and a Fun Walk participated in by young and old. Cups were given out to those who finished the walk and the Alabama Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation handed out certificates to Arthritis Self-Help Instructors who taught Arthritis Self Help courses held in Pine Apple.

"This is a very important service to the community and I hope that everyone will take advantage of it. I am thankful to those who helped us teach the classes," said Elyse Marley, regional director of programs for the Alabama Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation.

Among those instructors for the course was Sister Kathleen Stack, who also led relaxation exercises during the day for those that did not want to participate in the Fun Walk. "I think I got more out of teaching the class than the people participating. People responded so well to the information," said Stack.

Residents appeared to enjoy and support all the activities on hand during day, including the mayor who

welcomed everyone to the day's events.

"We need these kinds of activities in Pine Apple," said local resident Perline Monroe.

*By TAKENYA STOKES*



Sister Kathleen Stack the led group in relaxation exercises for arthritis.

# Compassionate nurses receive Anne M. Smith Award

Two dedicated and caring public health nurses were honored with the Anne M. Smith Award for 2002 in Montgomery on May 9. Mary Ann Seel of Walker County was selected as the home health winner and Anita M. Collier of the Etowah County was chosen as the clinic winner. These prestigious awards go to public health nurses in the state who epitomize public health nursing at its finest, provide direct care, and have been employed with the Health Department for a minimum of five years.



Mrs. Seel

Mary Ann Seel, Lifecare supervisor for the Walker County Health Department, has been a public health nurse for 17 years. She currently manages 14 home attendants, six licensed practical nurses and one administrative assistant. She has 65 patients and works with four case managers.

After taking mainly night classes, she graduated from Walker College in 1985 with her associate degree in nursing. She was divorced, raising two teenagers, and working full time but managed to reach her goal. She began working at the Walker Regional Medical Facility in the medical surgery ward. In the same year she started working at the Walker County Health Department as a home health nurse.

“Someone else saw in me what I could do in the home health profession,” Seel explained. “I’m very grateful that he did.”

In 1991 she graduated from the University of Alabama at Birmingham with her bachelor of science degree in nursing. She has not wanted to work outside of the home health profession, enjoys her job, and feels she is where she needs to be.

“I feel the need to help older people who are sick, in need, and don’t have much money,” she stated. “I know it sounds cliched, but that’s the way I feel. So many older people fall through the cracks. They don’t have anyone to take care of them. I regret that I can’t help more of them.”

Of her two children, the younger, Candy, followed in her mother’s footsteps by working as a nurse in labor and

delivery for the past 15 years providing care to expectant mothers. Seel’s son, Christopher, was born with Williams Syndrome, a condition of unknown cause characterized by mental retardation, unusual facial appearance, and frequent heart abnormalities. He works at Murphy Furniture Manufacturing Co. making wood products.

Nominators remarked that many people over the years “have been blessed by Seel’s influence.” Ms. Seel said she was “shocked” to receive the award, but pleased that she has so many friends.

Anita Collier has been employed with the department since 1993, first as clinic nurse and then as clinic supervisor for almost three years at the Etowah County Health Department.

One of her supporters stated, “If there were pictures in the dictionary under the word ‘nursing,’ Anita’s picture would be one of them.”

A letter of nomination said, “She is one that meets the challenge of the day with a smile and continues to have a great attitude as the day goes by. In time of crisis (patient faints, child falls in clinic, patient has reaction to vaccines or medicines) she keep her cool and is able to keep the situation in control.”

Another supporter said, “Anita is a dedicated nurse and a wonderful supervisor who always puts others’ needs ahead of her own. Etowah County Health Department has a large clinic with a very busy patient schedule. Anita manages this clinic with amazing poise and self-confidence. She remains calm, even in the most challenging situations.

“She is a very positive person and always has a smile on her face. She leads by example, modeling the behavior she expects from her staff. She is fair, honest and compassionate in dealing with both patients and staff. Anita moves easily from her role as supervisor to providing direct patient care. She is willing to do whatever it takes to see that her patient receive the finest care.”

*Award.....continued on page 7*



Mrs. Collier

# Second human case of WNV infection confirmed in Alabama

The second human case of West Nile virus infection in Alabama in 2002 was confirmed in a 47-year-old resident of Houston County. The individual was hospitalized during the last week of July and has been discharged to home.

“This second reported human case of West Nile virus in Alabama in 2002 should reinforce to individuals in Alabama that they need to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites. Every Alabamian should assume that mosquitos infected with West Nile Virus are in their community. The risk from mosquito bites will probably increase during the next two months and continue until a good freeze in late fall kills the mosquitoes,” said Dr. Donald E. Williamson, State Health Officer.

As of Aug. 9, 202 birds, 25 pools of mosquitoes, and 5 horses had been reported from 36 of Alabama’s 67 counties. These counts far exceed the level of virus activity reported in 2001, when 59 positive birds in 13 counties were detected, and none earlier than the end of August. In 2001 Alabama experienced two human cases of West Nile virus infection, one of which was fatal.

The department will increase its efforts to inform the public about the importance of personal protection measures individuals can take to reduce their risks of being bitten by infected mosquitoes. In addition, the department will distribute additional information to hospitals and clinics about this disease and the availability

## Award.....continued from page 6

While working diligently for both employees and patients, Ms. Collier lovingly helped care for her sister who died from breast cancer and for her mother who has Alzheimer’s disease. Her brother stated that her contributions to their family have been “immeasurable.”

She and her husband David are the parents of Jeremy, 23. Her husband stated, “Some people seem to have a calling in life, and I think that Anita was meant to be a nurse.”

Mrs. Smith served as director of Public Health Nursing for the Alabama Department of Public Health from 1964 until 1984.

of tests for human cases.

WNV and other mosquito-borne viruses such as Eastern Equine Encephalitis are transmitted from bird to mosquito to bird. Occasionally, the same mosquitoes will take blood from mammals, including humans and horses. Mosquitoes pick up the virus by feeding on the blood of infected birds. The disease cannot be spread from person to person or from animals to people.

Since mosquitoes are commonly found throughout much of Alabama, health officials offer practical strategies for the mosquito season:

### PERSONAL PROTECTION; CLOTHING AND AROMATICS

- Wear loose fitting, light colored clothes to help prevent mosquitoes from reaching the skin and to retain less heat, making yourself less “attractive” to mosquitoes. Mosquitoes are more attracted to dark colors.

- When possible, wear long sleeves and long pants.
- Avoid perfumes, colognes, fragrant hair sprays, lotions and soaps, which attract mosquitoes.

### PERSONAL PROTECTION; REPELLENTS

- Follow the label instructions when applying repellents. Permethrin repellents are only for clothes - not for application on the skin.

- When using repellents avoid contact with eyes, lips and nasal membranes.
- Use concentrations of less than 10 percent when applying DEET-containing products on children.

- Apply DEET repellent on arms, legs, and other exposed areas, but never under clothing.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.

- Citronella candles and repellents containing citronella can help, but their range is limited.

- Herbals such as cedar, geranium, pennyroyal, lavender, cinnamon, and garlic are not very effective.

### PERSONAL PROTECTION; AROUND THE HOME

- Mosquito activity peaks at dusk and again at dawn; restrict outdoor activity during these hours.

- Keep windows and door screens in good condition.
- Replace porch lights with yellow light bulbs that will

WNV.....continued on page 10

# Osteoporosis is a health challenge

**A**n Alabama Department of Public Health poster advises, “You’re never too young or too old to start boning up on osteoporosis, the bone thinning disease that leads to breaks and fractures. Get Calcium! Get Moving!”

As the poster cautions, osteoporosis often remains undetected until a fracture occurs. Hip fractures and spinal fractures in particular can be debilitating or even life threatening. Fortunately, through education, access to treatment and advances in treatment, osteoporosis can be largely prevented.

Data indicate that white females aged 65 or older are at the greatest risk for fractures, but a significant number of fractures also occur in every ethnic or racial background and in males.

Results from the 2001 Alabama Department of Public Health screenings, as found in the Alabama Osteoporosis Task Force 2001 Annual Report, are as follows:

- 4,026 people were screened
- 74% were normal
- 18% had osteopenia (a reduction in bone mass)
- 9% had osteoporosis

Results were almost identical by sex.  
Incidence increased steadily with age.

Screening paid off for a Huntsville woman recently. Although osteoporosis screening is not offered to employees through either the department or the HealthWatch program, she was identified, referred for further medical attention and now receives treatment. This is her letter of thanks:

Just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate the health screenings that your department provides. I had a screening done last year that included a bone scan and, through that screening, I found out that I have osteoporosis. I was referred to my doctor immediately and was sent for a full bone density study. I am now on Fosomax to help correct the problem. I am only 42 and I am not post-menopausal. If it were not for the health screening that was conducted by your agency, I would not have known that I had a problem and my bones would have continued to deteriorate. Thanks again for the work that you are doing. I hope that you will be able to continue it.

*Susan Clark, Unit Secretary  
Alabama Department Of Rehabilitation Services  
Huntsville*

## 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*.

**Linda Bolding**  
Center for Health Statistics

From Barbara P. Nye  
Scottsboro, Ala.

**Bill Duke**  
Center for Health Statistics

**Cleburne County Health Department Staff**

From Rosalyn L. Caffey  
Atlanta, Ga.

**Veronica Moore-Whitfield**  
Center for Health Statistics

From Glenda Daniel  
Address unlisted

**Theresa Mulkey**  
Center for Health Statistics

From Elizabeth Anthony  
Address unlisted

**Betty Thomas**  
Center for Health Statistics

**Albert Woolbright, Ph.D.**  
Center for Health Statistics

From Charles Woernle, M.D.  
Montgomery, Ala.

From Betty Ann Thomas Hsu  
Miami, Fla.



# Mobile health and faith-based partnership takes wellness to a higher level

In 1999 the goal was to bring various faith based organizations together to simply talk about health and how it related to their place of worship. Now with the planting of the seed and nurturing, the concept has blossomed into the Health Partnership Coalition (HPC).

The Health Partnership Coalition is a health and faith-based partnership established by the Mobile County Health Department. It is comprised of nearly 100 community organizations and individuals working together to empower local faith groups to improve the health status of their congregation and surrounding community.

Dr. Bernard Eichold, Mobile County Health Officer and pioneer of the coalition, states, "Churches have an important and powerful role in promoting the total health of their members- physical, mental as well as spiritual health."

The HPC selected 31 churches to participate in a yearlong pilot-program comprised of a quarterly health ministry education series. According to Dennis King, chairperson for the Partnership, "The goal of the series is to provide health education training, resources and instruction incorporating scripture making the connection between spiritual and physical health."

The third series will focus on emergency preparedness. Participants will receive CPR training from the American Heart Association. The American Red Cross will provide

instruction on how to prepare for various emergency situations (weather, fire, terrorism).

Previous sessions included instruction and training on heart health (blood pressure, cholesterol, stroke, nutrition and physical activity) and cancer control (breast cancer, prostate cancer) as well as information on smoking and the harmful effects including various types of cancer (throat, mouth and lung). The final series is scheduled for October and will focus on Disease and Disability (STD's, HIV/AIDS and diabetes).

The goals of the Health Partnership Coalition include: establishing health education and screening programs within local faith groups; training individuals within each faith group to serve as Health Resources Representatives; establishing a Health Ministry Committee in each church; promoting increased awareness and utilization of community health resources; serving as a resource in planning, implementing and evaluating health initiatives; providing regular Coalition meetings for continued community networking and collaboration, and to support the pilot program.

For more information call the Mobile County Health Department at (251) 690-8818.

By ELIZABETH WILLIAMS

## SPEAKING OF RETIREMENT

### Preretirement Education Seminars

The Retirement Systems of Alabama will launch its latest member service program in September. **Ret Prep Seminars** (Retirement Preparation) for active members of the Teachers Retirement System and Employees Retirement System are scheduled for various sites across Alabama. These seminars are for members who are at least within two years of retirement eligibility: A member who has at least 23 years of service at any age or a member who is age 58 with at least eight years of service.

**Ret Prep Seminars** are free, daylong seminars. Detailed information concerning Social Security and Medicare, health insurance, retirement adjustments and retirement options will be presented. Seminar participants will receive a valuable retirement planning book to assist them in their retirement preparation.

Members and their spouses wishing to attend must be preregistered. There are limited seating capacities for all seminars so registration is on a first-come basis. All registration forms must be submitted by **mail**. No faxes or phone call registrations will be accepted.

Schedules and registration forms will be mailed to the Human Resources Office at each TRS and ERS Agency. Any interested member should request a schedule and a registration form from his or her **employer**. Specific locations and times will be mailed to members in a confirmation letter once they have been officially registered.

### TRS Ret Prep Schedule

**September**  
24th                      Huntsville

*Retirement.....continued on page 10*

# Retirement.....continued from page 9

## October

2nd Tuscaloosa  
8th Montgomery  
16th Bay Minette  
30th Andalusia

## November

5th Muscle Shoals  
14th Gadsden  
21st Tuscaloosa

## January 2003

16th Hanceville  
22nd Montgomery  
28th Gadsden

## February 2003

6th Bay Minette

## ERS Ret Prep Schedule

### September

# WNV.....continued from page 7

attract fewer insects.

- Mosquitoes breed in standing water; empty all water from old tires, cans, jars, buckets, drums, plastic wading pools, toys, and other containers.
- Clean clogged gutters.
- Remove the rim from potted plants and replace water in plant/flower vases weekly.

25th Madison

## October

17th Bay Minette  
31st Andalusia

## November

6th Muscle Shoals

## January 2003

9th Dothan  
30th Montgomery

## February 2003

20th Pelham  
26th Phenix City

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.

- Replenish pet watering dishes daily and rinse bird baths twice weekly.
- Fill tree holes and depressions left by fallen trees with dirt or sand.
- Stock ornamental ponds with mosquito fish or use larvicide "doughnuts."

# Jessica Hardy to direct Office of Women's Health

Jessica Thomas Hardy of Selma has been named to direct the newly created Office of Women's Health within the Alabama Department of Public Health. The Alabama Legislature recently passed Act 2002-141 which created the office to be an advocate for women's health issues.

The purposes of the office as described in the legislation are as follows:

- To educate the public and be an advocate for women's health by establishing appropriate forums to educate the public regarding women's health, with an emphasis on preventive health and healthy lifestyles.
- To assist the state health officer in identifying, coordinating and establishing priorities for programs, services and resources the state should provide for women's health issues and concerns.
- To serve as a clearinghouse and resource for information regarding women's health data, services, and programs that address women's health issues.
- To provide an annual report on the status of women's health and activities of the office to the Governor and the Legislature.

"I am excited and challenged with this opportunity to advocate for women's health," Ms. Hardy said. "I am looking forward to this office helping to raise public awareness about women's health issues."

The new office is housed in Montgomery in the Office of Professional and Support Services, which serves as an administrative arm of the department. Ms. Hardy holds a bachelor's degree in nursing from Auburn University at

Montgomery and a master's degree in public health from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Ms. Hardy brings a wealth of public health experience to her new position. Formerly she served as assistant state nursing director for the department, and held several leadership positions in the Bureau of Health Provider Standards from 1990 to 2000.

Her additional health care experience includes serving as the director of nursing at Perry County Hospital and Nursing Home in Marion and as the assistant operating room manager at Vaughan Regional Medical Center in Selma.

The law provides for an advisory committee for the office. This Steering Committee will consist of three physicians appointed by the Medical Association of the State of Alabama; three nurses appointed by the Alabama State Nurses Association; three pharmacists appointed by the Alabama Pharmaceutical Association; three employers appointed by the Business Council of Alabama; three consumers, one appointed by the Governor, one appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and one by the Speaker of the House; three members appointed by the Alabama Hospital Association; and three registered dietitians appointed by the Alabama Dietetic Association.



Jessica Hardy



Etowah County Home Health sponsored an American Red Cross Blood drive at the Gadsden Senior Activity Center on June 28. The drive was a great success with 50 productive units of blood donated.

# Calendar of Events



**August 14**

Behavior Management of Persons with Dementia - Public Health Staff Development, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Debbie Thomasson, (334) 206-5226.



**August 22**

Medical Aspects of Sexual Abuse and Telemedicine, 9 a.m.-12 noon. For more information contact Lucia Grantham, (334) 670-3367.



**August 28**

Renal Disease in Home Care Patients, Home Health Aide and Home Attendant Continuing Education, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Brenda Elliott, (334) 347-2664, extension 402.

**September 3-6**

Alabama Primary Health Care Association 17th Annual Conference, Perdido Beach Resort. For more information contact Al Fox or Angie Blevins, (334) 271-7068.



**September 11**

Health Risk Assessment and Taking An Exposure History, Public Health Staff Development, 1-4 p.m. For more information contact Debbie Thomasson, (334) 206-5226.



**September 12**

Home Care Software Update, Home Health Training Continuing Education, time to be announced. For more information contact Brenda Elliott, (334) 347-2664, extension 402.



**September 17**

Hope for Health: Creating and Enhancing Partnerships Between Public Health and Education 12 noon-2 p.m. For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



**September 19**

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

**September 25-27**

15th Annual WIC Training Conference, "Makin' Waves," Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach. For more information contact Michele Jones, WIC Conference Coordinator, (334) 206-5043.



**September 26**

15th Annual Alabama AIDS Symposium - "HIV/AIDS: social and Cultural Perspectives, International/National and HIV and Hepatitis C, 10-11:30 a.m. For more information contact Brenda Cummings, (334) 206-5364.

