

# Alabama's health

*A publication of the Alabama Department of Public Health*

## *Local Partners Join National Effort to Promote Healthier Living, Wellness when Medicare Prevention Tour Bus Visits Montgomery*

**S**teps to a Healthier Alabama and the Alabama Arthritis Program were highlighted when a Medicare Prevention tour bus visited the East YMCA in Montgomery July 26. The visit included a roundtable discussion with community partners and an observation of a Living Well Alabama class.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services joined members in promoting the importance of preventing chronic disease and illness. An initiative called A Healthier US Starts Here encourages the public to take advantage of important screenings and preventive benefits offered through Medicare.

Dr. Thomas Miller, Assistant State Health Officer for Personal and Community Health, Alabama Department of Public Health, said,

"Prevention is the heart and soul of what we do in public health. Investments early on pay dividends long term and have a lot of implications for the future, especially with the prevention of chronic disease. I want Alabamians to be healthier and have a better quality of life."

Alabama faces some of the greatest challenges of all states:

- Alabama continues to rank among the top five states in the nation in percentage of overweight and obese residents. Four out of five obese persons have additional health problems.
- Sixty-five percent of Alabamians reported they are overweight or obese based on body mass index in the 2006 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System.
- The dramatically worsening obesity problem combined with other lifestyle factors such as physical inactivity leave



*Dr. Thomas Miller is shown with Christopher Downing, regional HHS administrator, with the Medicare Bus in the background.*

Alabama's residents at increased risk for chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, hypertension and cancer.

- Alabama ranks fourth highest in the U.S. in diabetes incidence—one in 10 adults have been diagnosed with diabetes. Nearly 80 percent of Alabama adults

*continued on page 9*

# VERB Summer Scorecard Holds Final Celebration for Champions

Steps to a Healthier Alabama was a co-sponsor of the VERB Summer Scorecard Program which encourages youth to be physically active for at least 60 minutes a day during summer. More than 450 youth who participated in the program attended a final celebration at Montgomery's Cramton Bowl Aug. 2.

Youth came from the YMCA Goodtimes Center, the East YMCA, Montgomery Parks and Recreation Community Centers, and from the community at large. This morning event was filled with fun and physical activity. Cheerleading groups from local junior high schools created and performed cute cheers about being healthy and losing weight. A jump rope team from Hayneville Road Elementary School and a step aerobics group from Carver Elementary School demonstrated skillful moves.

All youth were able to run the length of the football field, imagining how it must feel to score a touchdown during a football game. Other activities in which the children participated were dancing, playing ball, and small group games they enjoyed while waiting for everyone to arrive.

The VERB Scorecard Program involves parents or camp counselors who encourage youth to be physically active by signing off daily on a child's scorecard. The adults who played a role as counselors and members of the scorecard committee also participated in the activities that involved keeping the children active and moving.

Completed scorecards were entered into a drawing for prizes at the event. Every child who turned in a scorecard received a fun prize. More than 1,000 scorecards were turned in. Children went home with

t-shirts, nutrition information, and other various prizes. Children were permitted to complete multiple scorecards.

The VERB Scorecard Campaign inspires youth ages 5 to 14 to be physically active. It provides ideas and resources to help young people find ways to get active, and provides opportunities for them to add physical activity to their lives every day.

The campaign is an initiative of Steps to a Healthier Alabama and partnering agencies. Other co-sponsors for the VERB Summer Scorecard Program and the final celebration included: Montgomery Parks and Recreation Department, the YMCA of Montgomery, Auburn Montgomery, Montgomery Public Schools, the Governor's Commission on Physical Fitness, and the Nutrition and Physical Activity Unit of the department.



## 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 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 S. Taylor, J.D.** ..... Contributing Editor
- Noelle Ahmann** ..... Graphic Designer



# Diabetes Speakers Bureau Activities to Increase Within Alabama

The Alabama Department of Public Health Diabetes Branch and the Alabama Diabetes Advisory Council are initiating their 2007 Speakers Bureau. Members of the bureau are encouraging communities to increase partnerships, form coalitions, and engage in activities to work toward reducing prevalence for the disease.



State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson, spoke at the recent Tuskegee Area Health Education Center Inc.'s 4th Annual Diabetes Today community discussion at Tuskegee University. According to Dr. Williamson, the 2006 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data, reports that more than 20 million people in the United States have diabetes and more than 345,300 people in Alabama are aware they have the disease. The state currently is ranked fourth in prevalence of diabetes in the United States and its territories and one in 10 adults in Alabama has been diagnosed with diabetes.

Health disparities continue to be a concern. According to the Alabama Department of Public Health Center for Health Statistics, over 30 percent of Alabama's counties have five or fewer primary care physicians per 10,000 population, 55 counties do not have an endocrinologist, and 42 counties do not have diabetes educators.

Overweight and obesity continue to be a problem within Alabama. Some 62.6 to 65 percent of adults have a Body Mass Index (BMI) greater than 25. Diabetes accounts for approximately 3 percent of deaths. A major concern, especially with Type II diabetes, is improper diet and a lack of exercise.

The 2006 BRFSS data reveals that 27.1 to 30 percent of adults in Alabama engage in no physical activity. The 2005 Youth Behavioral Risk Survey (YRBS) for ninth through twelfth graders revealed that only 45 percent of Alabama students participate in daily physical education classes, compared to 33 percent nationally.

The 2005 BRFSS data indicates that nearly 80 percent of Alabama adults reported not eating enough fruits and vegetables. Adults are not the only ones at risk; the 2005 YRBS indicates that approximately 15 percent of Alabama teens reported that they ate the recommended five or more servings per day of fruits and/or vegetables. These proportions were substantially below the national averages.

## Healthful Eating at Restaurants

Eating healthy may be a challenge to people who are on the go and are tempted by convenient fast food restaurants, family-style buffets or large-portioned meals. Alabamians are encouraged to make healthy food choices, ask about portion sizes and check if the menu shows the calorie content of a meal. Do not be afraid to ask that your menu selections be prepared with less salt and no added fat.

The National Diabetes Education Program suggests a few tips to make healthy choices:

- Order first so others do not influence your choices.
- Order a small or half-portion meal or have an appetizer as a main meal.
- Order a salad to start and share a main dish.
- Choose steamed, grilled or broiled foods instead of those that are fried or sautéed.
- Order a dessert once in a while. Pick healthy desserts like fruit or frozen yogurt.
- Drink water or skim or low-fat milk instead of sweetened juices or soda.
- If you drink alcohol, choose wine or light beer. Avoid mixed drinks.

Be active! You can choose biking, camping, hiking or canoeing to raise your activity level. If you are off to the beach, you can go for a swim, take a long walk, or play a beach game. When driving for long periods, include time for a walk every few hours. If you are staying in a hotel, check out the gym, walk a few extra blocks instead of taking a taxi, swim in the hotel pool, rent bikes for the day, hike a nature trail, or spend the evening

*continued on page 8*

# Enthusiastic Participation and Support Highlight Pandemic Influenza Medical Surge Plan Exercise

The Center for Emergency Preparedness led a full-scale exercise at Garrett Coliseum July 24 to demonstrate actions that would be taken should there be an outbreak of pandemic influenza. Exercises of this scope typically require much advance planning and coordination, but this event was planned, numerous participants were deployed, and the exercise was held in one month's time.

This one-day functional exercise simulated a situation in which large numbers of citizens were becoming ill from influenza. A portable medical station was assembled

at the POD (point of dispensing) site used for vaccination purposes. In the exercise scenario, only the sickest patients were to be sent to the hospital and home care was stressed. An alternate care site also was set up to care for influenza patients who had no caregiver.

The exercise demonstrated the distribution of antiviral medications to priority groups through the POD site. The medical surge component was the focus of the exercise, but other components were added to simulate a more realistic event and response.

For the first time, exercise participants included soon-to-be-released prison inmates who were transported to the site and were asked to assimilate with the other exercise participants. They role played parts in the exercise. For example, a prisoner might be assigned to play a pregnant woman experiencing complications. Many enjoyed the meals-ready-to-eat heater meals provided at lunch.

Other participants included the Montgomery City/County Emergency Management Agency,

*continued on page 5*



Photos by Mary Conway and Katherine Blaze



## *Pandemic, cont'd from page 4...*

CARE Ambulance, Haynes Ambulance, EMS Innovations Inc., American Red Cross - Montgomery Chapter, Alabama Department of Public Safety, Alabama Hospital Association, and health department staff from the Anniston, Mobile, Montgomery and Selma regions.

State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson held a real-life news conference to discuss ways Alabama is planning for the possibility of an influenza pandemic. The conference was uplinked to the news media statewide.

He said, "Preparing our state for the possibility of a global influenza pandemic is a huge responsibility, and it is one which depends on the cooperation of everyone involved to be successful. As I've often said, preparedness is not a destination, it's a journey."

The state-level exercise encompassed several components of the state's operational plan including: the incident command system, use of communication systems and

procedures, use of the emergency system for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals, ability to exercise the department's vaccination and prophylaxis system, testing use of Learning Content Management System blast e-mail system, testing laboratory capacity, and testing triage and admission plans that would relieve stress on hospital system.

The purpose of all emergency preparedness exercises is to identify gaps in planning, so that these gaps can be addressed before an emergency occurs. This exercise helped improve the state's all-hazard plan, as well as the pandemic influenza plan.

Michele Williams, exercise program administrator, stated, "We were pleased with the enthusiasm shown. Initial after-action reports from participants indicated that policies need to be made to establish priorities, and participants need to be familiar with these policies in advance."

For more information about pandemic influenza, visit: [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov) or [www.adph.org/pandemicflu](http://www.adph.org/pandemicflu).



## *Breastfeed During the First Hour After Birth*

During August, the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action selected "Breastfeeding: The First Hour—Save One Million Babies!" as its theme for 2007.

Michell Grainger, state lactation coordinator with the WIC Program, said, "It is important that we provide education to families about the importance of breastfeeding during the first hour after birth. Timely initiation of breastfeeding is beneficial for both the baby and the mother."

Evidence-based practices such as immediate skin-to-skin contact and a quiet environment can help babies softly move toward the breast. Initiating breastfeeding during the first hour makes use of the baby's sucking reflex, which is strongest during the first hour of life.

*August 2007*

## *Retirees*

The following department employees have retired recently:

*July*

**William Niemeyer**

Lee County Health Department

**Haywood Scott**

Community Environmental Protection

**John Sobera**

Perry County Health Department

*August*

**Wendy Blackmon**

Family Health Services

**Barbara Erskine**

DeKalb County Health Department

*Alabama's Health*

# Preparing for Retirement: What Your Beneficiary Should Know

When a loved one dies, beneficiaries often find they are overwhelmed and unprepared to deal with the death benefit process. Therefore, it is very important for ERS members to communicate with their beneficiaries and provide them with as much advance information as possible.

## **DESIGNATING OR CHANGING A BENEFICIARY FOR AN ACTIVE OR INACTIVE MEMBER**

New members designate a primary and contingent beneficiary or multiple beneficiaries when they begin employment. If the member wishes to change the beneficiary designation, the member must complete a CHANGE OF BENEFICIARY FORM PRIOR TO RETIREMENT. Do not use this form if you are retired or in DROP. Keeping your beneficiary current will help avoid legal difficulties and not delay payment of the death benefit to your beneficiary.

## **DEATH OF AN ACTIVE MEMBER**

The death benefit process begins when the ERS is notified of the member's death. It is important for the death to be reported as soon as possible to avoid any delays or problems. Contact the ERS at 1-800-214-2158. The ERS will send you FORM RSA-SB APPLICATION FOR SURVIVOR BENEFIT to be completed with a list of documents (for example, Certified Death Certificate) the ERS requires to complete the process. The beneficiary may also obtain the application from the member's employer or the RSA Web site at [www.rsa.state.al.us](http://www.rsa.state.al.us).

## **BENEFICIARY BENEFITS OF AN ACTIVE MEMBER**

If a member dies prior to retirement, death benefits are calculated and paid to

the beneficiary based on the member's age, service credit, employment status and eligibility for retirement. Consult your ERS Member Handbook or visit our Web site for information on preretirement death benefits.

## **CHANGING A BENEFICIARY FOR A RETIRED MEMBER**

The retired member should contact the ERS for the necessary form required to change a beneficiary.

## **DEATH OF A RETIRED MEMBER**

Please notify the ERS as soon as possible upon the death of a retiree. Upon



notification, the ERS will mail the necessary form and information to the member's designated beneficiary. Any outstanding benefit payments must be returned to the ERS before processing the beneficiary payment(s).

## **BENEFICIARY BENEFITS OF A RETIRED MEMBER**

Once the ERS receives the documents from the beneficiary, the ERS will determine and calculate the benefits due to the beneficiary. In the month of death, the monthly retirement benefit will need to

be returned to the ERS, unless the date of death is the last day of the month.

If the retired member selected the Maximum retirement benefit, the beneficiary will receive a pro rata payment for the number of days the member was living in the month of death.

If the retired member selected the Option 1 retirement benefit, the beneficiary will receive a pro rata payment for the number of days the member was living in the month of death and any balance in the member's account at the time of death.

If the retired member selected the Option 2 retirement benefit, the beneficiary will continue to receive the same monthly benefit as the member, except when legislation did not pass on Cost-of-Living Adjustments to the beneficiary.

If the retired member selected the Option 3 retirement benefit, the beneficiary will begin to receive 50 percent of the monthly benefit of the member, except when legislation did not pass on Cost-of-Living Adjustments to the beneficiary.

## **HELPFUL HINTS**

Have a copy of your will accessible to the executor of the estate.

Death benefits may be subject to federal income tax, but not state and local taxes. If the beneficiary lives outside Alabama, consult that state's tax agency about tax consequences.

*continued on page 8*

## Arriving Safe to School is the No. 1 Rule: Child Pedestrian Safety Tips

While the wheels on the bus still go round and round, many students are relying on alternate forms of transportation to get to school, including biking and being driven by parents. And, in growing numbers, many students are also walking to school. No matter how Alabama's children arrive to and from school, the focus should always be on having a safe trip.

Walking to school can be a fun, exciting and healthy experience for children if done safely. Parents and guardians should never assume that a child knows how to cross the street correctly. Preschool children should be supervised at all times when walking because they often move quickly and are unaware of danger. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, children are at increased risk for pedestrian injuries because their smaller size makes them difficult for drivers to see and they are often unable to judge distances and vehicle speeds accurately.

Injuries while walking can be prevented by:

- Supervising child pedestrians at all times.
- Teaching by instruction and example. Explain to your child how to cross the street and to always follow signs. Practice crossing the street properly with your child.
- Supporting and promoting safe behavior. Acknowledge when your child has crossed the street correctly and praise him or her for doing so.

When crossing the street your child should always:

- Stop at the edge of parked cars, the curb or other vehicles.
- Look LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT for moving cars.
- Cross when clear and keep looking left and right.
- Look for sounds that a car is about to move (rear lights, exhaust smoke, sound of a motor and wheels turning.)
- Walk alertly.

Several programs have been created to support walking to school and to encourage opportunities for daily physical activity. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a program developed by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Its strategy has been initiated across the United States and has received national recognition. It has also been implemented in Montgomery.

Safe Routes to School is a federal program administered through the Federal Highway Administration aimed at reducing congestion, improving poor air quality, and enhancing biker and walker safety around schools. The program was created by Section 1404 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users Act (SAFETEA-LU). The program is funded for \$612 million over five federal fiscal years (FY 2005-2009) and is to be administered by state Departments of Transportation.

The Alabama Department of Public Health, Alabama State Department of Education and the Alabama Department of Transportation have joined forces to implement this federal directive in Alabama. Public Health and the Department of Education will focus on the non-infrastructure (mainly education) component of this grant while DOT will focus most of its attention to the infrastructure component of this grant. To date, activities have occurred within Montgomery at Carver Elementary and Chisholm Elementary schools, and at Heritage Elementary School in Madison.

"Our target audience is K-8 and each school system will go through an application process to obtain infrastructure and non-infrastructure activities," said Jamey Durham, Montgomery Area Safe Routes to School coordinator. "The benefits of this program are numerous—safer communities, reduction in childhood obesity and better air quality around schools." If you are interested in participating in the program, please contact Jamey Durham at 334-206-5634 for more information.

By VICTORIA BROUSSARD





# Tobacco Prevention and Control Coordinators Receive Awards

The Tobacco Prevention and Control Division recently recognized six area tobacco prevention and control coordinators for their outstanding work during the year. Awards were made at the division's end of the year wrap-up session at the Montgomery County Public Health Department June 27.

Awards covered the grant year, June 30, 2006 through June 29, 2007. Awards and winners were:

**Smoke Free Homes Award:** Tina Findley, Public Health Area 9, for obtaining the most smoke free homes pledges;

**Media Guru Award:** Fayette Royal, Public Health Area 3, for producing the most comprehensive media campaigns and for providing media support to her peers;

**Policy Training Award:** Tammie Burnette, Public Health Area 5, for conducting the most tobacco control policy presentations;

**Clean Indoor Air Ordinance Award:** Tina Findley, Public Health Area 9, for educating 10 communities that passed clean air ordinances;

## Diabetes, cont'd from page 3....

dancing. Include at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day.

The Alabama Department of Public Health Diabetes Branch utilizes "Systems Thinking" to work toward opportunities to improve the health status of a community. "Systems Thinking" is a creative, flexible, future-oriented problem-solving and decision-making process. It allows stakeholders to view interrelationships rather than cause-effect chains. It is pro-active, manages the processes of change, and anticipates consequences of actions and responses.

Members of the Speakers Bureau are as follows: Terry Ackley, M.A.; Ace Anglin, D.P.M.; Barbara Bain, R.N.; Gwendla Glover; Debra Griffin, R.N.; Jessica Hardy, B.S.N., M.P.H.; Jack Hataway, M.D.; Martha Holloway, R.N.; Patsy Kanter, R.N., C.D.E.; Gwendolyn Lipscomb, R.N.; Mary McIntyre, M.D.; Lawrence McRae; Jim McVay, Dr.P.A.; Kristy Meanor, M.A.; Thomas Miller, M.D., M.P.H.; Pamela H. Payne-Foster, M.D., M.P.H.; Dennis Pillion, Ph.D.; Kyle J. Reynold, Dr.Ed.; Habiba Shaw, Ph.D., and Condit F. Steil, Pharm.D. and Jon Tanja., R.Ph.

To learn more about diabetes visit [www.adph.org/diabetes](http://www.adph.org/diabetes) or call NDEP at 1-800-438-5383.

By KYLE REYNOLD, ED.D.



Tobacco Prevention and Control Award Winners for 2007 are as follows: Fayette Royal, PHA 3; Tina Findley, PHA 9; Niki Phillips, PHA 7; Jim McVay, Dr.P.A., Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Director; Tammie Burnette, PHA 5; and Demetra Peoples, PHA 8.

**Childcare Provider Training Award:** Demetra Peoples, Public Health Area 8, for training the most staff and parents on the dangers of secondhand smoke; and

**AARP Training Award:** Joy Rhodes-Watkins, Public Health Area 2, for training the most healthcare providers in the "Ask, Advise, Refer, Prescribe" method of treating patients who are tobacco users.

By JULIE HARE

## Retirement, cont'd from page 6....

Keep your beneficiary updated at all times.

Beneficiaries should also use direct deposit for monthly benefit payments.

Consult an attorney or tax advisor.

Do you know who your beneficiary is? If not, contact the ERS and they will provide the information in writing.

Prepared by the Communications staff of the Retirement Systems of Alabama.

To have your questions answered in "Preparing for Retirement", please address them to:

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



## Bus, continued from page 1....

report not eating adequate amounts of fruits and vegetables.

- Approximately 30 percent of adults engage in no physical activity whatsoever, and a quarter of adults use tobacco.

“We need to lead Alabamians in every age group to personally commit to lifestyle changes that will positively affect their health,” Dr. Miller said. “While the individual bears the ultimate responsibility for making wise decisions about health, we must work in partnership to create an environment to support, encourage and reinforce wise choices. Behavior change is not easy, but it is essential for Alabamians.

Christopher Downing, regional director of the Department of Health and Human Services, and Capt. Clara Cobb, Regional Health Administrator, Department of Health and Human Services, attended the Montgomery event which included representation from the Alabama Quality Assurance Foundation, the Alabama Farmers Market Authority, the Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians, the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama.

The Medicare Prevention tour bus is visiting each of the 48 continental United States to promote conversations among people with Medicare, families, caregivers, health professionals and community organizations.

A Healthier US Starts Here encourages Alabamians to adopt the following lifestyle habits:

- Make physical activity a part of your day
- Eat more healthy foods

- Protect yourself and your family from illness
- Avoid risks to your health and to your loved ones

In Montgomery, visitors first participated in a partner roundtable to explore collaborative projects. Then they observed a class at the East YMCA called Living Well Alabama which is cosponsored by the Steps Program and conducted by the Alabama Arthritis Branch of the Alabama Department of Public Health.

The mission of Steps to a Healthier Alabama is to reduce the prevalence and burden of obesity, diabetes and asthma. Its services include programs and initiatives focused on individuals, families, community organizations, environmental enhancements, and government and policy changes to enhance improved nutrition, physical activity, tobacco avoidance and health care access. Steps funds community-based activities in two regions of the state: the Steps River Region (Autauga, Elmore, Lowndes, Macon and Montgomery counties) and the Steps Southeast Alabama Region (Pike and Barbour counties).

National data show that the increased use of Medicare preventive benefits can help prevent and detect chronic diseases early in their course, when they are most treatable, and can save lives. For example:

- More than 34 million Americans have low bone mass, placing them at increased risk for osteoporosis. Osteoporosis can be prevented and early diagnosis and treatment can reduce or prevent fractures from occurring.
- Decreasing total cholesterol levels by 10 percent in the U.S. population could result in a 30 percent reduction in the incidence of coronary heart disease.

- One pneumonia vaccine, which is free to Medicare beneficiaries, can be life saving—yet only about two-thirds of those with Medicare report receiving the service and 46,700 U.S. adults die annually from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Many beneficiaries are unaware that Medicare covers preventive screenings and other benefits, sometimes at no cost. New demands will be placed on the Medicare system as vast numbers of baby boomers begin reaching Medicare eligibility. The health of beneficiaries and the health of the Medicare Trust Fund depend upon on effective prevention programs.

Medicare currently covers:

- One-time “Welcome to Medicare” physical (including an abdominal aortic aneurysm screening)
- Cardiovascular screenings
- Smoking cessation counseling
- Cancer tests – mammogram screening for breast cancer, pap test and pelvic exam screenings for cervical and vaginal cancer, colorectal cancer screenings, and prostate cancer screening
- Shots and vaccines – flu, Pneumococcal pneumonia, Hepatitis B
- Bone mass measurement
- Diabetes screening, glucose monitoring supplies and self-management training
- Medical nutrition therapy for people with diabetes or kidney disease
- Glaucoma test

People with Medicare are being asked to take action, to talk to their healthcare providers and to visit [www.mymedicare.gov](http://www.mymedicare.gov) to learn more about preventive services they are eligible to receive and to access tools to help manage their healthcare. Information is also available at 1-800-MEDICARE.

# Bob Nyberg Receives Jim Baker Award

X-ray technician Bob Nyberg has been a “can do” member of the TB Program team for longer than many of his colleagues have even been alive. Nyberg began his public health career in 1967 and worked closely with Jim Baker during his 41-year tenure.

State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson said, “This year, I am pleased to present the award to Bob Nyberg, a man who survived many hours on the road with Jim as they provided chest X-ray services to citizens across the state.”

In expressing the department’s appreciation, Dr. Williamson said, “I am told that we could not respond to urgent requests for assistance without your willingness to make adjustments on the fly. The recent outbreak response in north Alabama would not have been

possible without you. Your efforts were critical to our success in preventing further spread of tuberculosis.”

Public Health Area 1 Health Officer Dr. Karen Landers reported that two additional cases of TB in north Alabama would have been missed without Nyberg’s help.

Dr. Williamson concluded his remarks by saying, “Thank you for your service, and for continuing the tradition of excellence in TB control.”

The Jim Baker Award was established four years ago to honor Baker for his commitment to public health. In each succeeding year, a member of the TB program staff who best represents Jim’s “can do” attitude and dedication to excellence is recognized.



*Lem Burell of the East Central Chapter is presented the Environmentalist of the Year Award of the Alabama Environmental Health Association.*

## Fast Facts

*During Each Day in Alabama (2005 statistics) There Were An Average Of:*

Live Births .....	165.1
Births to Teenagers.....	21.7
Low Weight Births.....	17.6
Births to Unmarried Women .....	59.0
Induced Terminations of Pregnancy ....	26.6
Deaths.....	128.2
Heart Disease Deaths .....	35.1
Cancer Deaths .....	27.0
Accidental Deaths .....	6.5
Motor Vehicle Fatalities .....	3.2
Homicide Deaths.....	1.2
Suicide Deaths .....	1.4
Infant Deaths .....	1.5
Fetal Deaths .....	1.5
Marriages.....	115.0
Divorces .....	61.5

From the Center for Health Statistics



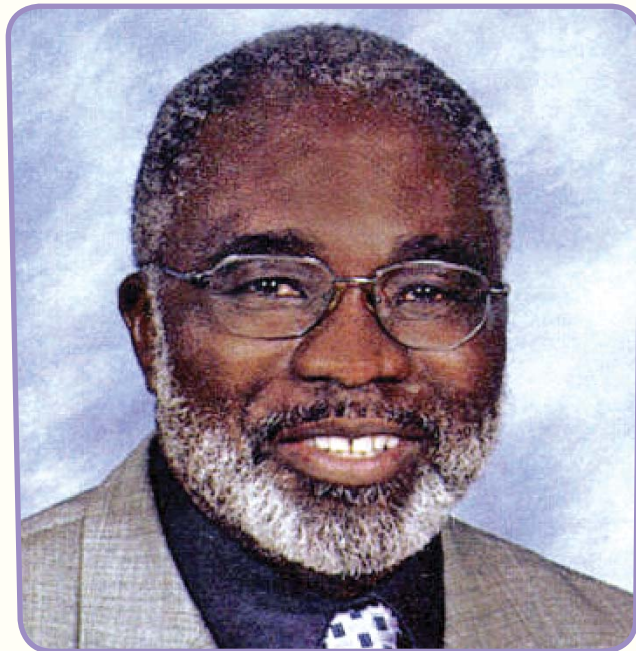
*Shown are Jim Baker, Bob Nyberg and Pam Nix.*



# Bureau of Clinical Laboratories Loses Parasitologist

**R**obert Curtis Hawkins, Jr., age 59 was an employee with the department's Bureau of Clinical Laboratories as its parasitologist in the Microbiology Division for over 30 years. Robert initially retired in June 2002, but soon returned in November 2002 and remained a faithful and dedicated worker until his passing on July 9, 2007. Robert was very meticulous and enjoyed his work and loved his lab family. After he returned from retirement, the laboratory recognized that it needed him as much as he wanted to return.

The quality of his work reached beyond the State Laboratory. The Centers for Disease Control stated, "We are sorry to hear of the death of Robert. We had the pleasure of meeting him at our workshops and speaking frequently to him by phone or e-mail. He was a wonderful parasitologist and will be greatly missed". The department has lost a great soldier in the fight against parasitic diseases. He will be missed, but not forgotten.



## 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*.

**Jackie Asher**

**Kay Bice**

**Tonya Blankenship**

**Cristina Bruno**

**Carolyn Duck**

**Sue Parker**

**Carter Sims**

**Debbie Wetzell**

**Vicky Whatley**

**Carol Williams**

Health Provider Standards

*from Rick Harris*

Health Provider Standards

**Denice S. Clark**

**Kelly A. Foster**

**Virginia Jackson**

**Jo A. Marshall-Kine**

**Elnora Robinson**

Dallas County Health Department

*from Ashvin Parikh*

*Selma, Ala.*

**Deborah Bivins and DIS Staff**

Public Health Area 3

*from Linda Robertson*

*Tuscaloosa, Ala.*

**Carolyn Burcham**

**Pamela David**

**Jimmie Guyton**

Health Provider Standards

*from Pam Vogt*

*Owens Cross Roads, Ala.*

**Danny Doyle**

**Sally Palmer**

Health Promotion and Chronic Disease

*from Glynnis LaRosa, RN, MPH, CPHQ*

*Jamaica Plain, Mass.*

**Mike Free**

**Benny Lee**

Facilities Management

*from Glenn C. Sisk*

*Sylacauga, Ala.*

**Lisa Carter**

Region 1 Perinatal Director

*from Leigh Smith, RN, BSN, IBCLC, RLC*

*Sheffield, Ala.*

**Matthew Conner**

**Guy Woodall**

Logistics Division

*from Jan LaFollette*

*Dadeville, Ala.*

*Jeanette Whaley*

*Roanoke, Ala.*

**Wayne DuBose**

Health Provider Standards

*from Marlene Hart, R.N.*

*Grand Bay, Ala.*

**Nicole Henderson**

Center for Health Statistics

*from Barbara W. Harrell*


*Tuskegee, Ala.*



# Calendar of Events


**September 12**   
**Satellite Conf & Web Cast**  
**Consequences of a**  
**Foreign Animal Disease**  
**on the Rural Community,**  
**12 noon-1:30 p.m.**  
For more information contact Video  
Communications, (334) 206-5618.

**September 18**  
**Satellite Conf & Web Cast**  
**Short-term Birth**  
**Interval: Counseling**  
**Family Planning Patients**  
For more information contact  
Stacey Neumann, (334) 206-3897.

**September 19**   
**Satellite Conf & Web Cast**  
**Infection Control**  
**Update 2007 for Home**  
**Health Aides and**  
**Attendants, 2-4 p.m.**  
For more information contact  
Debbie Buchanan, (334) 206-5711.

**September 20**   
**Satellite Conf & Web Cast**  
**Employment**  
**Opportunities for**  
**Individuals with**  
**Disabilities**  
For more information contact Video  
Communications, (334) 206-5618.

**October 11**   
**Satellite Conf & Web Cast**  
**Vector Control**  
**After Hurricanes**  
For more information contact Video  
Communications, (334) 206-5618.

**October 24**   
**Satellite Conf & Web Cast**  
**Collaboration: The Key**  
**to Public Health System**  
**Improvement**  
For more information contact Video  
Communications, (334) 206-5618.

**November 1**   
**Satellite Conf & Web Cast**  
**ADPH Staff Meeting with**  
**Dr. Williamson, 3-4 p.m.**  
For more information contact Video  
Communications, (334) 206-5618.