This theme has come alive for me the last few weeks. The program committee has surely been riding the rapids as we have dealt with travel and hotel arrangements (is it even physically possible to fly from Baltimore to Nashville, deliver a lunch-time keynote in Franklin, TN and be in Washington DC in time to catch the 5:00 PM flight to Calcutta, India? Keep reading to find out the answer.) The tides have waxed and waned a bit for sure, but the waters are starting to calm and we are all looking forward to cruising through to September!

I hope you have received your registration brochure and were happy with what we have to offer this year. Please be sure to register early! And, watch the newsletter and web site for program tweaks and changes. This year we have 33 total CEUs available (a max of 13-14 per discipline).

When the conference opens on Wednesday, September 11, we will be welcomed to Williamson County by Mayor Rogers Anderson and we will be honored to have the Tennessee Highway Patrol Color Guard with us to present the colors. After lunch we will have two Keynote addresses.

**Dr. Gregory Gray**

Local and regional food safety and zoonotic diseases problems are becoming international in scope, due to modern transportation and agricultural techniques, and affect thousands of people and animals. Dr. Gray is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Environmental and Global Health at the University of Florida’s College of Public Health and Health Professions. His department offers the only One Health concentration within Master’s and PhD degree programs in the United States. Dr. Gray will provide a presentation that takes the theme of “one health” from theory to practice in the public health setting.

**Dr. Stephen W. Patrick, MD, MPH, MS**

Dr. Patrick is the newly appointed Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Vanderbilt School of Medicine in Nashville, TN. Until recently he was practicing neonatal-perinatal medicine at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and is a fellow of the University of Michigan Health System. Dr. Patrick’s research on (Continued on page 2)
I have heard all my life that “time flies as you get older”. I know there a few of you that know what I am talking about and for the rest of you, believe me it is true. My year as President of TPHA has flown by and, as this newsletter goes to press, is almost over. It has been a privilege and honor to serve this year. If you ever get the opportunity to run for an office in this organization, do it. You will learn and grow and make lots of new friends along the way.

Plans for the annual conference in September are well on the way to being complete. Committees are busy putting the final touches on all the moving parts. The Program and Arrangements Committees, led by Ami Mitchell and Nancy Brookshire, are making sure everything is in place to set the stage for learning. Paul Petersen and the Poster Committee have an excellent group of posters for your review. The Awards Committee, chaired by Debbie Johnson, is working on choosing our newest winners from all of the well-qualified nominees. The Exhibits Committee, chaired by Matt McDaniel, and Registration Committee, chaired by Vanessa Watkins, are working hard. Continuing Education will again be provided for several different disciplines and that committee, led by Jennifer Valentine, has worked diligently to ensure our members will be able to receive the maximum CE for their specific discipline. Then there are those committees who are working on revisions to the Bylaws (chaired by Art Miller); this year’s resolutions (chaired by Chris Taylor); elections (chaired by Kevin Morris); and Silent Auction (chaired by Evelyn Vaillencourt). And, of course, I would be remiss without mentioning the Fun and Fitness Committee. Paula Masters and Robert Goff have co-chaired this year and they have both fun and fitness opportunities planned for us. (May the best region win the coveted spirit stick! Come on Upper Cumberland!) Because of all the hard work that has been done by all of our committees, I think you will find this year’s conference to be excellent. I hope all of you are planning to come and participate in both the learning and the fun. While you are there, network with your colleagues from all sectors of public health practice and come away with a renewed energy and spirit.

The Committees mentioned above, who more directly influence the annual conference, are only a few of the many who make TPHA the active and well respected organization it is. In addition, Doris Spain, our Executive Director, manages to keep us on the right track as we “Navigate the Currents”. I want to extend my thanks to all those who helped this year on the Board and as committee chairs and members. But I also want to thank all of our members. It takes all of us working together, each doing his or her individual part in this association, in the workplace and in the community, to make an impact on the health and prosperity of the citizens of Tennessee.

So, get your hotel room and your registration done for the annual conference. The time is here. I can’t wait to see you in September!

State and territorial health agencies can make an incredible impact in this area by decoding the key elements for success that can then be shared with others to promote further integration, increase healthcare quality, decrease cost, and improve overall population health.

This presentation falls in line with Dr. Montero’s Challenge and is key for today’s evolving public health environment. Those who attend will learn of the need for integration of public health and health care, review regional input and output differences across the nation that impact population health, discuss the national framework that is currently in existence, and share their own experiences and expectations of how this integration relates to them. Dr. Montero enjoys interactively during presentations and welcomes participation and feedback.

neonatal abstinence syndrome has been published in the Journal of American Medicine. He will bring us an update on the national perspective of neonatal abstinence as well as comment on the data that Tennessee is collecting through the new reporting mechanism. Dr. Patrick will bring a deeper understanding of complications of opiate pain reliever use, including neonatal abstinence syndrome.

Thursday morning we kick off at 8:00 with five concurrent workshops. Workshop #1, just added this week, features Dr. Dave Boxrud, Molecular Epidemiology Supervisor with the Minnesota Department of Health who will be speaking on culture independent lab testing. Two very special events we are offering during the 8:00 hour include a half day training session for selected Health Council members from all across Tennessee, and, a very specialized TDH WORKshop for specific TDH employees. These sessions will prepare community members and TDH to work together to effectively address tobacco prevention in our State.

A second slate of work shops is scheduled to begin at 9:45 AM on Thursday. As the Health Council members continue their training, five additional concurrent sessions will be offered. Dr. Fred Angulo DVM, PhD, Workshop #8, is coming to us from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention where he works as Associate Director of Science, Center for Global Health. His work has taken him literally all over the world and he is a leader in his field of global disease detection. You will also notice a workshop offered by Rachel Smith MD, MPH, LCDR, USPHS on public health’s response to the 2012-13 fungal meningitis outbreak. Dr. Smith’s article...
Create a Regional Boat Pennant

To provide the opportunity for regions to work together before the meeting and involve employees who might be unable to attend, there will be a boat pennant competition. Each region will be responsible to create a boat pennant that will represent their region. The pennants will be submitted for judging at the TPHA conference and then displayed during the President’s Reception and Fun and Fitness Event on Thursday evening of the conference. Regions are encouraged to be creative and are allowed to use any medium of their choosing (i.e. card board, poster board, felt, fabric, foam board, etc.) The only restriction is the pennant must be a triangle that is 2 feet x 3 feet (see picture) and must contain components of your region (i.e. pictures, their choosing (i.e. card board, poster board, felt, fabric, foam board, etc.)


See the registration brochure for details on other workshops offered on Thursday covering topics such as “Managing Change in the Workplace” and “The Affordable Care Act”. On Thursday afternoon one of our own members, Dr. Paul Erwin will present “Evidence Based Public Health”.

Our tradition of celebrating our annual awards winners will continue this year on Thursday. At the podium we will be honored to have Tennessee Commissioner of Health, Dr. John D. Dreyzehner. Dr. Dreyzehner will give an address titled, “Primary Prevention/Health Protection Moving Needles in Tennessee.”

Joining Dr. Dreyzehner will be Dr. Jack Lacey, University of Tennessee Chief Medical Officer and former chair of the Governor’s Task Force on Health and Wellness. Co-presenting with Dr. Lacey will be Rick Johnson, of Governor Haslam’s health and wellness initiative, Healthier Tennessee. Dr. Lacey and Mr. Johnson will highlight the work of the former Task Force and explain how Governor Haslam plans to move forward to a healthier Tennessee.

At the 2:30 plenary session, back by popular demand is Dr. William Schaffner. Dr. Schaffner embodies the essence of a true public health partner in traditional and innovative methods. We have all seen Dr. Schaffner make the rounds on the National news shows effortlessly sharing life-saving information like a star. During this plenary, he will talk about his experience with public health messaging and the media.

I know what you are thinking - could there be more in a day? Well of course we have our President’s Reception honoring our current President, Karen Lynn on Thursday night followed by *Sink or Swim*, our 2013 Fun and Fitness Competition.

We will be back Friday morning for another round of concurrent sessions to include TDH’s Dr. Marion Kainer speaking on her work in response to the fungal meningitis outbreak. Other nationally renowned experts offering workshops Friday morning are Dr. LJ Tan, Chief Strategy Officer for the Immunization Action Coalition in Oak Park, IL who will speak to the effect of the Affordable Care Act on immunizations; Catherine Morrison, MPH from the Alzheimer’s Association, speaking on Alzheimer’s Disease as a public health issue; and Sharon Hopkins, DVM who comes to us from Seattle-King County, Washington to speak on reducing zoonotic disease.

Robert Pestronk, MPH, NACCHO Executive Director, will be our speaker for the closing plenary session. As Executive Director for the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), Robert M. (Bobby) Pestronk represents our nation’s local health departments and their staff, who protect and promote health, prevent disease, and seek to establish the social foundations for wellness in nearly every community across the United States.

Mr. Pestronk’s session will be based on his recent *NACCHO Exchange* column about ePublic health. E-public health includes, but is not ONLY electronic health records. It also includes telemedicine, consumer health informatics, health knowledge management, virtual health care teams and using grid computing for population health! This is one you will not want to miss!

By the way, as it turns out, it is not possible to book flights from Baltimore to Nashville, give a lunch-time speech in Franklin and then fly Nashville to Washington DC in time to catch the 5:00 to Calcutta! Also, the TPHA Conference falls during jaguar tracking season in South America! These are just some fun facts I have learned this year a Program Chair.

**PRESIDENT’S RECEPTION & FUN AND FITNESS**

“Sink or Swim”

TPHA Fun and Fitness 2013

This year’s Fun and Fitness activities are sure to have something for everyone! Even if you are not planning on attending the annual conference in September, there are still activities where anyone can participate and be part of their regional team. Below are descriptions of all the activities. Please look over carefully, get excited, and gear up! We can’t wait to see all the wonderful things that are sure to come out of the regions for this year’s Fun and Fitness. Good luck!!!

**Treasure Hunt**

Pictures of water themed items will be placed in common areas of the TPHA conference area at the Marriott. All participants will receive a card with the items at registration and then are charged to locate each item and write-in the location of where the item was found. Each region will submit ONE completed card for scoring.

**Create a Regional Boat Pennant**

To provide the opportunity for regions to work together before the meeting and involve employees who might be unable to attend, there will be a boat pennant competition. Each region will be responsible to create a boat pennant that will represent their region. The pennants will be submitted for judging at the TPHA conference and then displayed during the President’s Reception and Fun and Fitness Event on Thursday evening of the conference. Regions are encouraged to be creative and are allowed to use any medium of their choosing (i.e. card board, poster board, felt, fabric, foam board, etc.) The only restriction is the pennant must be a triangle that is 2 feet x 3 feet (see picture) and must contain components of your region (i.e. pictures, images, etc.)
name, landmarks, etc.) Each region will receive a score from the judges to go toward their overall regional points.

Just sit right back…..One of the highest participations Fun and Fitness experiences is when there is an offering of a group activity where regions get the opportunity to show their talents. This year’s activity promises to be entertaining. Each region is responsible for creating an act to present to the entire TPHA group at the Fun and Fitness event on Thursday night. Here’s the fun part…..Your act must begin with the lyric “Just sit right back and you’ll hear the tale” from the Gilligan’s Island song. Your act can be a song using the music from Gilligan’s Island, a poem, dance, etc.; you can even act it out and turn it in to a short play. Just begin with that line and be creative! The only other restriction is it must depict your region in some way. It’s up to you to determine the details. Each region will present their act to the group and have 1:40 to do so, one minute to set up, and one minute to break down. If you wish to use the music (however you desire), please contact Paula or Robert. Each region will receive a score from the judges to go toward their overall regional points.

Under the Sea - At the Fun and Fitness event Thursday night, each region will select a group of four to represent them in a large scale limbo competition. Each individual will go one-by-one under the limbo sea until there is one person remaining. The region’s whose team member is the last standing, will receive the highest points and then there will be points given to second, third, and fourth place. How low can you go?

Long Voyage Relay
There will be a 4 leg relay for regional groups to compete against one another on Thursday night. Each leg will require regional representatives to race against other regions. Highest points will be given to the region whose team crosses the finish line first, and then there will also be a second, third, and fourth place. All points go toward regional point totals.

Leg 1: Peg Leg-groups of two from each region will participate in a 3 legged race.
Leg 2: Walk the plank-groups of three from each region will use two “planks” to navigate the high seas of the relay course. Don’t fall off!
Leg 3: Man Overboard-one person from each region will be required to navigate the relay course in sea gear. What would you want if you went overboard?
Leg 4: Gone Fishin’-groups of four will perform necessary tasks to properly get ready to fish while relaying back to one another after their particular task is complete. Did you know fishing was a team sport?

Tie Breaker
If after all other competition is completed and there is a tie of points between regions, we will conduct a tie breaker activity. Shown here are three different boat knots. We suggest at least one person from each region be familiar with how to tie these knots just in case you find yourself in a tie. We are knot kidding!!

REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE
Submitted by: Chris Taylor, Chair

The following resolutions have been approved by the Board of Directors and will be presented for adoption at the TPHA business meeting. Questions or comments should be directed to Chris Taylor at chris.j.taylor@nashville.gov.

RESOLUTION OF THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION REGARDING ENERGY DRINKS

WHEREAS, The aggressive marketing of energy drinks as a quick pick-me up and an instant source of vigor has made the energy drink business a $3.5 billion a year industry; and,

WHEREAS, The target consumers for energy drinks are adolescents and young adults and reportedly as many as half of individuals in this age group who consume energy drinks do so on at least a weekly basis; and,

WHEREAS, While the stimulant caffeine is the primary ingredient in energy drinks and caffeine content may be listed on the label, many energy drinks also include other caffeine-containing stimulant substances like guarana, kola nut, tea, yerba mate, cocoa and others which do not require caffeine labeling; and,

WHEREAS, Cola and coffee also contain caffeine but the amount of caffeine in an energy drink ranges from two to five times what is found in cola; and,

WHEREAS, Energy drinks offer minimal nutritional value and frequently contain high amounts of sugar and other

(Continued on page 5)
chemicals or supplements like taurine, ginseng, carnitine, ginkgo, inositol, milk thistle or grape seed extract most of which there is little known regarding the effect of long-term or repeated consumption; and,

WHEREAS, Frequent ingestion of energy drinks can adversely affect health and be associated with side effects like irritability, heart palpitations, insomnia, and more serious cardiac, renal, musculoskeletal and central nervous system problems; and,

WHEREAS, There has been a doubling of the number of Emergency Room visits linked to Energy Drinks with a recent SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service) finding energy drink-related ER visits rising from 10,068 in 2007 to 20,783 in 2011, and,

WHEREAS, A new trend to mix alcohol with energy drinks often leads to a very serious problem of combining alcohol which is a depressant with caffeine which is a stimulant and when taken in combination may significantly alter someone’s awareness of their degree of intoxication and therefore adversely affect their judgment; and,

WHEREAS, Confusion exists between the use of sports drinks like Gatorade and PowerAde and energy drinks which are not recommended for consumption before, during or after exercise and the use of highly caffeinated beverages in combination with exercise greatly increases the likelihood of health related side effects.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Tennessee Public Health Association strongly recommends we work with consumer protection organizations to protect underage consumers by providing better product labeling to reflect the true concentration of stimulate ingredients in all energy drinks as well as warn of the extreme risks of combining energy drinks and alcohol

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that warning labels be encouraged cautioning that the consumption of energy drinks during exercise or as an aid to rehydration after exercise is not recommended

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be furnished to members of the Tennessee General Assembly and that a copy of this resolution be spread upon the minutes of the Association.

RESOLUTION OF THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION REGARDING HEAVY BACKPACKS

WHEREAS, Overloaded school backpack are causing an increasing problem of back pain and spinal strain for students across the nation; and,

WHEREAS, Because spinal ligaments and muscles are not fully developed until after age sixteen, over weight backpacks are a source of repeated low-level stress that may result in chronic neck, shoulder or back pain in children; and,

WHEREAS, Reviews of emergency room data have revealed over 7000 visits per year by children being treated in the ER for backpack related injuries and over 28,000 office visits for backpack related injury; and,

WHEREAS, The effects of children carrying heavy backpack are continually being studied and have shown heavy loads carried on the back have the potential to compress intervertebral disc height and damage the soft tissues of the shoulder causing microstructural damage to the nerves; and,

WHEREAS, Children’s textbooks are much heavier now than many years ago and in addition to textbooks students often carry computers, cell phones, water bottles, running shoes, band instruments and other equipment considered essential to have readily available; and,

WHEREAS, More than 90 percent of students carry backpack which in studies have been found to weigh as much as 25 percent of the child’s body weight, and,

WHEREAS, Backpacks are often not worn correctly – often slung over one shoulder or allowed to hang significantly below their waistline increasing the weight on the shoulders and making the child lean forward when walking or stoop forward when standing to compensate for the weight; and,

WHEREAS, Rolling backpack do remove the weigh from a child’s back but are sometimes not allowed in schools due to the concern over being a trip hazard in the hallways or the difficulty carrying them up and down stairways,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Tennessee Public Health Association strongly recommends all school administrators, teachers, parents and schoolchildren be educated about the potential health impact of heavy backpacks and take proactive measures to avoid injury, and,
BE IT FURTHER Resolved, schools should work with their PTA/PTO to assess the extent to which students use overweight backpacks and promote innovative homework strategies lessening the need to take all school materials and books back and forth each day, and

BE IT FURTHER Resolved, schools should consider the following points when developing their backpack education talking points:

- Backpack should weigh no more than a maximum of 10% of a child’s body weight
- Encourage ergonomic backpacks with individualized compartments to efficiently hold books and equipment
- Urge children to wear both shoulder straps and not sling the pack over one shoulder
- Encourage wide, padded adjustable straps to fit a child’s body.
- Encourage the heaviest books be left at school and handouts or workbooks be used for homework assignments
- Schools need to consider moving toward e-textbooks as federal and state funding becomes available
- Schools should consider integrated education about backpacks by using a hanging scale in the classroom allowing students to weigh their pack and enter the results into a graph that would track the weights and then look at the data to determine what can be done to lighten loads, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be furnished to members of the Tennessee General Assembly, the Tennessee Department of Education and the Tennessee School Boards Association and that a copy of this resolution be spread upon the minutes of the Association.

REPORT OF THE
CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE
Submitted by: Art Miller, Chair

The following revisions to the TPHA Constitution and Bylaws have been approved by the TPHA Board of Directors and will be voted on by TPHA members at the Association’s annual business meeting on Wednesday, September 11, 2013 at 11:00 AM (CDT).

Constitution-
Article VI: Membership
- Section C: The rights to vote, hold office, and serve as committee chairs shall be limited to Active and Life Members of the Association.
- Change to: The right to vote shall be limited to Active, Life and Student Members of the Association. The right to hold office and serve as committee chairs is limited to Active and Life Members.

By Laws:
Article I. Membership and Dues
- Section 5. The right to vote, hold office and serve as Committee Chair shall be limited to Active members who are in good standing (dues paid to date) and Life members.
- Change to: The right to hold office and serve as Committee Chair is limited to Active members who are in good standing (dues paid to date) and Life members. The right to vote shall be limited to Active, Life and Student Members of the Association.

Article II- Officers
- Section 1. “A majority vote of those voting shall be required to elect the officers of the Association as prescribed in the Constitution. Vote may be taken by ballots which shall be sent to all Active and Life Members of the Association roster, provided the ballots are sent out at least thirty (30) days in advance of the Annual Meeting…”
- Change to: Section 1, 2nd sentence “…Active, Life and Student Members…”

- Section 5. All resolutions and proceedings of the meetings shall be entered in proper books by the Executive Director. He shall issue all notices of meetings and shall perform all duties pertaining to the office of Secretary. He shall keep a register of the members of the Association.
- Change to: Section 5. Change “he” to read “he/she”

Article III- Board of Directors
- Section 7. The Board of Directors shall approve the program for the forthcoming Annual Meeting at its interim meeting to be held when called by the President.
- Remove “at its interim meeting to be held when called by the President.”

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(Continued from Page 6)

**Article V- Standing and Special Committees**

- Section 1: Standing and special committees of the Association and their respective chairs shall be appointed by the President at the time he assumes office and shall be confirmed by the Board of Directors at its concluding session of the Annual Meeting. Committee members shall serve until the close of the next Annual Meeting and, with the exception of the members of the Nominations and Election Committee, may succeed themselves. Only Active and Life Members of the Association may serve as chairs of committees. Standing committees of the Association shall be:

  a) Program Committee  
  b) Membership Committee  
  c) Public Relations and Publicity Committee  
  d) Annual Meeting Arrangements Committee  
  e) Exhibits Committee  
  f) Constitution and Bylaws Committee  
  g) Awards Committee  
  h) Audit and Finance Committee  
  i) Nominations and Election Committee  
  j) Scholarship Committee  
  k) Registration Committee  
  l) Public Policy Committee  
  m) Continuing Education Committee  

  *Section 1: Add*  
  n) Legislative  
  o) Resolutions  
  p) Silent Auction  
  q) Public Health Week  
  r) Fun and Fitness  
  s) Poster Session  

- “…The ballot of nominees as determined by the Nominations and Election Committee shall be sent to all Active and Life Members in good standing at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Meeting.

  *Change to:* “…shall be sent to all Active, Life and Student Members…”

**Article VI. Sections**

- Section 2. The officers of each section shall be Chair, Vice-Chair, Chair-elect, and Secretary-Treasurer. Officers shall be elected by the members of each section for a term not to exceed three (3) years. Newly elected officers assume their elected position at the close of the Annual Meeting the year of his/her election. Vacancies in the office of Chair shall be filled by the Vice-Chair.

  *Change to:* Section 2: The officers of each section shall be determined at that section’s meeting and must include the Chairman who will serve as that sections Board Representative. Officers shall be elected by the members of each section for a term not to exceed two (2) years. Newly elected officers assume their elected position at the close of the Annual Meeting the year of his/her election. Vacancies in the office of Chair shall be filled by the Vice-Chair.

- Section 5 The Secretary-Treasurer shall keep all resolutions and proceedings of the section meetings, conduct all correspondence relating to the section, and perform all duties pertaining to the Secretary. The Secretary-Treasurer shall keep all moneys payable to the section, and moneys payable by the section shall be paid by check signed by the Secretary-Treasurer. An annual report shall be submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Tennessee Public Health Association within ninety (90) days following the Annual Meeting.

  *Change Secretary-Treasurer to Chair or designee*

- Section 8: The Chair of each section shall serve as the Representative of that section on the Board of Directors and may serve as many as three consecutive two-year terms.

  *Change to:* Section 8: The Chair of each section shall serve as the Representative of that section on the Board of Directors.
Article VIII- Rules of Order

The rules of parliamentary procedure according to the last edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order* shall govern all meetings of the Association. The President shall appoint a parliamentarian to assist in meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Association. Questions concerning parliamentary procedure or the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association shall be referred to the parliamentarian for his ruling thereon.

*Change to:* Removed requirement for parliamentarian. “...Questions concerning parliamentary procedure or the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association shall be referred to the President and or Executive Director for a determination.”.

Article IX. Amendments

i) These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the Active Members and Life Members present and voting at an Annual Meeting, provided said amendment(s) have been approved by the Board of Directors, and provided the members of the Association have been officially notified and sent a copy of the proposed amendment(s) at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting at which the specified amendment(s) shall be considered.

• Add Student Members

(Continued from page 7)

FOCUS ON PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES

Public Health Practice in South Africa
Submitted by: Sarakay Johnson

This past fall I completed a public health internship with The Thoughtful Path, a non-profit organization located in Munsieville, South Africa. Working with fellow public health student Courtney Stanley, I got to experience an entirely new culture and implement various community improvement projects. What started out as a random question from Courtney asking me if I wanted to do an internship abroad, turned into an inspiring and challenging semester.

Courtney and I began our internship by touring the township of Munsieville. What surprised me the most about the area was the stark juxtaposition of poverty and affluence. On the outskirts of Munsieville there are nice, well-structured homes. However, as one travels deeper into the heart of the township, the houses change into tin and metal shacks—pieced together with whatever materials are available.

After exploring the area and learning about various community needs, Courtney and I began our work. One of the first projects we completed was planting a vegetable garden with lettuce, spinach, tomatoes, and beets. Because we planted the starter plants at the beginning of our time there, we were able to watch the plants grow throughout the semester. People were able to use the vegetables we had grown to make salads for the community!

This small gardening project led to a larger initiative with Garden Soxx®, a concept developed by a company called Filtrex International. The product consists of a black mesh material that can be cut to any desired size and filled with weed-free compost. The self-contained sock garden creates perfect growing conditions for plants without requiring a large piece of land or nutrient rich soil. Courtney and I learned of a need for these gardens in an area called Mshenguville, which is an informal settlement within Munsieville. We led a gardening class to teach assembly of the sock gardens, what vegetables could be grown, and how to tend to the gardens. Then in subsequent classes, we let those who first learned about the gardens teach others who were new to the class. This promoted project sustainability and encouraged the people of Mshenguville to learn about gardening and nutrition.

While the sock gardens were a large initiative, there were more simple ways that public health improvements were implemented. This included teaching hand washing techniques and proper teeth brushing to children at a health fair, as well as creating various health information pamphlets on topics such as puberty, HIV/AIDS, mental health, nutrition, and exercise. These seemingly small actions made a big impact on health education and improving community health.

If someone had told me a year ago that I would be spending almost three months working abroad, and that I would fall in love with a small township in South Africa, I would not have believed it. My time in South Africa passed much too quickly, and the people that I met and worked with made a significant impact on me. Each person taught me something new and gave me a different perspective, and I feel blessed to have been a contributor to the great things that are happening in Munsieville.
Students put the “CORE” in FoodCORE
By: Cara Williams, Tennessee Department of Health, Central Office

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it is estimated that approximately 1 in 6 (roughly 48 million) Americans become ill from foodborne illnesses each year. Of these 48 million Americans, nearly 128,000 are hospitalized and another 3,000 die. In 2009, CDC funded a pilot project to improve state and local responses to foodborne disease outbreaks. The project was initially launched in three centers, however it was so successful that it expanded to other centers and in 2011 was renamed FoodCORE – Foodborne Diseases Centers for Outbreak Response Enhancement. FoodCORE centers work together to detect, investigate, respond to and control foodborne illnesses in about 14% of the United States’ population.

The foundation of Tennessee’s FoodCORE program is the student interview team. This team consists of five students from Tennessee State University and Vanderbilt University whose majors are in the public health or health science fields. The main task of the student interview team is to conduct surveillance interviews for the state’s Salmonella and Shiga toxin-producing E. coli (STEC) cases. It is the responsibility of the students to work with the epidemiologist to keep the regional health departments informed of high-risk cases and possible outbreaks. The students also assist in outbreak investigations led by the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) by contacting control cases and conducting interviews.

The FoodCORE epidemiologist, Susan Miller, is impressed with this year’s student workers, “They are a gold-star team. This model has been successful in Tennessee and in other states in rapidly responding to and solving foodborne illness outbreaks. It has been great to have interested students in our office and they’ve received hands-on experience that strengthens our public health workforce.”

The students’ provide their own perspectives.

Jennifer Bellido, an undergraduate at Vanderbilt University, explains “FoodCORE is a great environment to work in. Weekly surveillance and FoodCORE meetings have allowed me to learn more about what the TDH actually does.

Currently a graduate student at Vanderbilt University, Matthew Goldstein “enjoys learning how public health departments can impact the masses through preventative measures”. As a future medical student, Matthew’s experience at the TDH has served him well. He says, “through conducting surveillance with cases, many of whom are still experiencing or had recently recovered from debilitating foodborne illness, I will be able to enhance the relationships with my patients, as I now have a better understanding of illness and its impact on individuals and their families.”

Sheila Storey is an undergraduate nursing student at Tennessee State University values her time spent with the FoodCORE program because it gives her insight to the field of public health nursing. “This experience has taught me a lot about teamwork, which is very important in patient care.”

As an MPH student at Tennessee State University, Cara Williams appreciates the real-life experience being a member of the FoodCORE team has provided her. “The experiences that I have gained in such a short time will be ones that stay with me forever. Using firsthand, concepts learned in the classroom and actually utilizing them to make a difference in the health of Tennesseans has been an amazing and worthwhile experience.”

Muhammad Chauhan is an undergraduate Vanderbilt University, says that “the experience thus far has been great and very educational.”

The student’s abilities to interview cases and delve into possible causes of these foodborne illnesses is what will continue to make the program thrive. To learn more about Tennessee’s FoodCORE program, please visit our website: http://www.cdc.gov/foodcore/centers/tennessee.html

Shown from left to right: Matthew Goldstein, Cara Williams Sheila Storey, Jennifer Bellido, and Muhammad Chauhan

REGIONAL REPORTS

“Just Trucking It”
Submitted by: Phyllis M. McNeill, Manager - Environmental Sanitation, Shelby County Health Department

People everywhere have always had an affinity for food; however, with the advent of reality cooking shows, and that bizarre show where people eat toasted roaches and other dietary delights, the interest in a variety of food has propelled us to a new level. People love food, whether it’s in a five star restaurant, greasy spoon, bistro in Paris, or seaside resort café on the Jersey Shore. But now, folks want to eat their food from a truck, parked almost anywhere Whoa!! Isn’t that against the law in Memphis? Not anymore!!

Over two years ago, Environmentalists of the Shelby County Health Department were plagued with illegal food vendors selling food all over the City of Memphis and Shelby County. They sold tamales from grocery store carts. Others sold various
celebrate, there was a food truck rodeo and other events to allow citizens to see what a nice addition it was to the atmosphere of the Bluff City to enter the big time…we now had food trucks.

While the city rejoiced, we found new problems. Since so many citizens began to see food sold from permitted trucks in parking lots and from the street side, they assumed they could sell food there as well…minus the truck. So, here we go again. I suppose our staff will have to keep on trucking.

Our office, along with the County Attorney and the City Council of Memphis met to discuss the enactment of a local law that would allow permitted food trucks to sell food from the street side. After many meetings with legal eagles, politicians, prospective food truck vendors, the media, and the Memphis Restaurant Association, the motion was passed to allow for a local code to regulate and permit Food Trucks in Memphis...like in New York, L.A., Chicago, and other large municipalities. To celebrate, there was a food truck rodeo and other events to allow citizens to see what a nice addition it was to the atmosphere of the Bluff City to enter the big time…we now had food trucks.

SOUTH CENTRAL

Babies are Born to Breastfeed
Submitted by: Janet McAlister, Assistant Regional Director, South Central Region

The Giles County Health Department is working to promote awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding, as it has a significant impact on reducing obesity, and give support to breastfeeding mothers in an effort to increase the number of women that breastfeed. Earlier this year, a survey was sent out to local employers to determine how businesses supported breastfeeding mothers in the workplace. A total of thirty-three businesses responded by completing the survey. Results from the survey indicate only nine percent of those surveyed are currently recognized as breastfeeding-friendly businesses. In addition, approximately half of those surveyed currently provide a space for employees to breastfeed or express milk.

Four local businesses made the choice to become designated as a breastfeeding-friendly location. In order for a company to be designated as breastfeeding friendly, a pledge may be taken at www.eatwellplaymoretn.org and clicking “Breastfeeding Welcomed Here.” Participating businesses receive recognition on the website and a sticker to display on the business entrance. The use of this symbol is to alert mothers to public locations where they can breastfeed comfortably.

Members of the Giles County Primary Prevention Initiative Team are Wendy Brown, Public Health Office Assistant; Diane Coggin, Registered Dietitian; Allison Leggitt, Community Liaison; Kaleb; Naythen; Janet McAlister, Health Department Director; Dava Gooch, Health Educator; Candace Wilkes, HUGS Case Manager.

Spring Fling
Submitted by: Janet McAlister, Assistant Regional Director, South Central Region

The Maury County Health Department Primary Prevention Team (PPI) hosted the Spring Fling Fitness Fair on April 3, 2013. Targeting at-risk middle school aged youth, the PPI Team invited the Boys & Girls Club of Maury County to participate. The kids were divided into four groups of twelve with four rotating stations.

- Obstacle course composed of a military crawl, tire hop, balance beam, jump ropes, hay bales, & sack races
- Sporting activity which included basketball drills and a football toss
- Nutrition education covering the importance of water, sugar in drinks demonstration, & water bead craft activity. Children were offered fruit & yogurt parfaits which were donated from McDonalds.
- Competitive ‘Four Square’ game

At the end of the event, goodie bags were distributed as token of how they could apply what they learned to improve their health. Enclosed in the bags were pedometers, beach balls, fruit/yogurt parfaits & snack wrap coupons, pencils, first aid kits, bowling alley coupons, sport bracelets, and bottled water. After the youth returned to the club, evaluations were distributed so we could get feedback on the event. One child stated, “I didn’t know I could exercise in so many ways, and actually have fun.” Our PPI Team had several community partners including Maury Regional Medical Center, Balloon Shop, Lowes, Centerstone, Wal-Mart, Target, McDonalds, & Maury EMS.
West TN - Submitted by Elna Blankenship

ABC’s of Safe Sleep Public Service Announcement - On May 20, 2013, Tara Rogers, RN, MCH Coordinator for Jackson-Madison County Health Department and Janna Beth Shaull, RN, MCH Coordinator for the 10 southern counties of the West TN Region in Jackson arranged for Sandy Alexander to record an "ABC’s of Safe Sleep" Public Service Announcement (PSA). Sandy lost her 12 week old son on June 9, 2009 to SIDS. In honor of her son, Sandy is dedicated to spreading awareness of the importance of providing a safe sleeping environment for infants. This PSA is currently being played on radio stations 92.3, 94.1, 97.7, and 104.1 in West TN and will be played on stations statewide very soon.

Carroll County Established Youth Health Councils - The Carroll County Community Health Council, led by Health Educator, Barbara Kelly and Tracy Byrd, County Director, utilized a small Get Fit Tennessee grant to establish Youth Health Councils in the schools and to purchase educational items to assist them with peer-to-peer educational activities. The Carroll County Youth Health Councils are composed of two representatives from each 7th through 12th grade class in each of the five school districts. The South Carroll Special School District’s Youth Health Council received the Council’s 2012-2013 Excellence in Student Health Promotion award for their efforts to improve student health. Part of their outstanding efforts included the Clarksburg Youth Health Council placing 2nd in the National JAMmin’ Jingle Contest. Members of the Youth Council composed a song and routine for the contest which was performed by the school’s seventh grade classes. The video will be featured on the JAM School Program website at http://www.jamschoolprogram.com.

2013 Public Health Summer Institute - The School of Public Health at the University of Memphis launched its 2013 Public Health Summer Institute with twelve workshops in Jackson and Memphis. The workshops, aimed at enhancing public workforce development, were funded through LIFEPATH, the Tennessee Public Health Training Center, of which the School of Public Health is a partner. LIFEPATH is a collaborative partnership between Tennessee’s academic public health training providers and the state’s public health workforce to provide comprehensive competency-based training. During the month of June, faculty from the School of Public Health provided workshops to the West Tennessee Regional Department of Health. Administrators, physicians, nurses, health educators, and social workers attended. Continuing education credits were provided to nurses and health educators. In keeping with TDH policy, healthy snacks and lunches were provided at the sessions!

Tipton County PPI Team Partners with Local District Attorney - On June 19, the Tipton County PPI team Kathy Robinson, Health Educator, Kathy Dye, PHOA, Earnestine Walk, HUGS/CSS Social Worker and Jennifer Newsome, RN partnered with Children and Family Services Inc. of Covington, to share the ill effects of substance abuse with the youth attending their annual summer camp. Participants viewed “The Deceptive Dangers of Prescription Drug Abuse” showing real Tennesseans battling substance abuse and dealing with various outcomes including jail time, embarrassment and death as a result of bad habits. The video, provided by District Attorney, Mike Dunavant, as part of the statewide Deceptive Danger campaign, focuses on educating youth that just because a substance is prescribed by a doctor or can be purchased at a convenience store does not make it safe and to not be deceived.

Walking the Talk in Hardin County - The Burnt Church Community in Hardin County recently sponsored their first annual “Moms, You Rock!!” 5K Run/Walk. On June 24, 167 men, women and children ranging in age from 0-5 years to 75 & up participated in the event. First, second and third place awards were given in each age category. Hardin County Health Department nurses completing the course included Kim Adams, Christie Stricklin, Dale Reynolds and Pattie Kiddy, RN, County Director. Dale and Christie made it a family affair and their daughters, Emma Reynolds and Lizzie Stricklin, joined the fun. We are proud to announce that Pattie Kiddy, won 1st place honors in her age group. The Hardin County nursing staff is “walking the talk” in West TN.

SOUTHEAST

Give a Kid a Chance Helps Students with School Supplies and EPSDTs

Submitted by: Beth Delaney

The Southeast Tennessee TENnderCARE staff worked with the Rhea County Health Council to hold the 7th annual Give a Kid a Chance (GAKAC). GAKAC assists Rhea County students by providing free school supplies as an incentive to be up-to-date on EPSDTs. Students have to show proof that they are up-to-date on their EPSDT to receive the school supplies.

Many services were available at the event for families. Free haircuts, scoliosis screenings, and lice screenings were available at the event. Some families were found to have lice and received a free lice treatment kit so they will be able to get their children treated before the school year starts. Treating lice before the school year starts may prevent numerous absences once school begins. Forty-five vendors provided information or education for the attendees. This year’s event included car seat checks, fingerprinting and picture IDs, the rollover car, meth trailer, and a bounce house and face painting for fun. Local businesses donated prizes including two bicycles and an iPod shuffle.

Over 300 children were registered and attended the event. There were 50 children who could not attend the event so they showed proof of a current EPSDT at the local United Way office and received their school supplies. School supplies are donated by local businesses and through a “stuff the bus” campaign held before the event. Rhea County has found this to be an effective way to make sure children are current on their well child exam as well as prepared for school.
EAST -  Regional NAS Task Force  
Submitted by: Danni Lambert, Family Health & Wellness Director, East Region

The East Regional Office and Knox County Health Department have formed a Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) Task Force as a collaborative effort against the growing epidemic in East Tennessee.

One initiative gaining national attention is collaboration between pain clinics and local county health departments in offering increased access to long-term family planning methods for women of child bearing age who are also pain clinic patients. The goal is to reach the child bearing aged woman, and provide contraception, prior to her becoming pregnant, thereby, preventing Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome altogether. The regional NAS Task Force is investigating the possibility of implementing a similar initiative in the region. There is no evidence of this being done before so this Task Force would be blazing the trail!

MOMs Task Force Created in Sevier County -  
Submitted by: Jana Chambers, County Director, Cocke & Sevier Counties

As a result of an alarming increase in babies being born at LeConte Medical Center in Sevierville with drug related exposure, the Moms on Meds (MOMs) Task Force was organized to bring community partners together to begin looking at the problem. The partners include LeConte Medical Center, East Tennessee Children's Hospital, Sevier County Health Department, as well as other area community agencies.

MOMs first took up the task of making the community aware of the problem. In December 2012, they hosted a community forum with over 50 participants. As a result more agencies and individuals became involved, and MOMs is now working toward securing a Drug Free Community Mentoring Grant for the prevention of substance abuse. Another community forum is scheduled for August 16th, 2013. This “Kick Off” is open to the public and everyone on MOMs is working to get the word out to the community through flyers and letters sent directly to the attendees from the December meeting. The event is open to anyone interested in learning more about MOMs. The LeConte Medical Center CEO, Ellen Wilhoit, will moderate and introduce speakers, as well as talk about what has been done since the meeting in December. Kelly Luskin with the Department of Health Maternal and Child Health will discuss NAS, the state perspective. Stephanie Strutner with Allies for Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP) in Anderson County will discuss the mentoring grant MOMs is working towards and the goals in seeking the grant. Dr. Anderson-Maddron, a local OB/GYN Physician, will discuss specific Sevier County data related to Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS). In addition to these speakers, video clips of local judicial, government, law enforcement officials will be shown in which they discuss what they are seeing related to the increase in drug use in Sevier County. Local resource agencies will be set up to share their program information.

MID CUMBERLAND

One challenge that we as a Department have, is losing folks that have a wealth of public health knowledge and experience. The Mid-Cumberland Region has experienced this over the past couple of months, and it not only affects the Region, but TPHA. Two recent retirees, Paulette Cowan and Becky Brumley have a long history with the Department and TPHA and will be genuinely missed.

Paulette Cowan, a familiar face at TPHA’s registration table, retired on June 28th after almost 42 years in the Department. Paulette began her public health career in 1972 in the Central Office, Office of Vital Records. From there she became a part of the Mid-Cumberland Region’s traveling Family Planning team for six years. In 1980, Paulette went to work at the Robertson CHD serving as an Office Assistant and later the Office Supervisor. In 2000, Paulette moved to the Regional Office where she served in various capacities including Personnel Officer in which she served until her recent retirement. Deputy Commissioner, Eugene Neubert, was on hand to present Paulette her 40 Year Service plaque.

Another, dedicated employee who has served TPHA in numerous capacities is Becky Brumley. Becky retired on July 16th, after 32 years of serving the Department. Becky began her public health career in 1981 in the West TN Region as a Dental Hygienist then later moved to the East TN Region to serve there as Dental Hygienist. In 1996, she was promoted within the East TN Region to the Director of Assessment and Planning. In 1998, Becky was promoted again to the Department’s Central Office to serve as a Program Director within the section of Community Development. Then in September of 2004, Becky was promoted to the position of County Director of the Williamson County Health Department where she has served for the past nine years. Becky’s work within the health department as well as her community is unparalleled. Rogers Anderson, County Mayor, was on hand for Becky’s recent retirement celebration to present Becky with a plaque in recognition of her contributions to the Department and to Williamson County.

Both these individuals have served their Department and the Association well.