A Notable Change to the 2011 Annual Conference

Submitted by: David Brumley, Program Committee Chair

If you have attended a TPHA-sponsored conference or meeting during the past few years, you know emphasis has been placed on completing evaluation forms. Comments and suggestions from attendees help numerous TPHA committees in their conference planning activities.

Several changes were made to the format of last year’s annual educational conference, all of which contributed to improving the overall conference. Exhibitors were moved to a more central location in the conference facility. Wednesday evening was ‘on your own,’ and the battle to claim ownership of the coveted spirit stick followed the president’s reception on Thursday night. The TPHA business meeting was held late Thursday afternoon which enabled us to provide more workshop sessions and schedule them on all three conference days.

One of the more important aspects of our annual conference is providing approved continuing education credits for numerous health care disciplines. Changes to the conference agenda which increase the amount of available continuing education credit receive thoughtful discussion by conference planners.

A notable change has been made to the agenda for this year’s conference; a change which allows us to offer more sessions and therefore more continuing education credits than ever before. How? Our annual TPHA business meeting is moving to Wednesday morning as a ‘pre-conference’ event. A 30-minute business meeting will start at 11:00 AM (Central) and will lead into the usual opening session, luncheon, and keynote address. With this change the conference agenda now has time slots for five plenary session speakers and 25 workshop sessions.

Mark September 14-16 on your calendars and make plans to join us at the Cool Springs Marriott in Franklin. Once again, conference evaluations will be collected, reviewed, and discussed. Please give us your feedback on the 2011 conference and how things might be improved for 2012.

Dr. Agwunobi to Deliver Keynote Address at 2011 Annual Conference

Submitted by: David Brumley, Program Committee Chair

For many years, TPHA’s annual educational conferences have featured excellent keynote speakers. Once again, the conference program committee has been hard at work, and as a result, this year’s opening session will feature an outstanding keynote speaker - Dr. John O. Agwunobi, Senior Vice President and President of Professional Services for Wal-Mart Stores U.S. Dr. Agwunobi oversees the company’s health and wellness business unit, including pharmacies, vision centers, and health care clinics. He joined the company in September 2007.

Prior to joining Wal-Mart, he was the Assistant Secretary for Health for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and an Admiral in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps. As Assistant Secretary for Health, Dr. Agwunobi’s served as the Secretary's primary advisor on matters involving the nation's public health. His responsibilities included disease prevention, health promotion, women’s and minority health, the reduction of health disparities, fight against HIV/AIDS, pandemic influenza planning, and vaccine preventable diseases. He was actively involved in the push for improvements in research and enhanced access to quality health care.

Before becoming the Assistant Secretary for Health, Dr. Agwunobi served as Florida’s Secretary of Health and State Health Officer from October 2001 to September 2005. In that role, he confronted many public health challenges, including leading the state’s public health and medical response to the unprecedented four major hurricanes that struck Florida in 2004. Dr. Agwunobi led the state’s response to the nation’s first-ever intentional anthrax attack of 2001. He subsequently guided Florida’s nationally recognized efforts to protect the state against bioterrorism.

As Secretary, Dr. Agwunobi led the call for a healthier Florida, advocating for improved nutrition and exercise in an effort to address the state’s epidemic of overweight and obesity. His Department’s many successes included responses to West Nile, SARS, and numerous
A new year on the calendar is seen by many as a crossroads, providing an opportunity to keep moving in the same direction or to veer in another. Whether to continue in the chosen direction with a foot tapping the brake or with the gas pedal to the floor is determined by both where one is going and where one has been. Regardless of the speed of travel, it’s always good practice to check the rear view mirror every now and then. But although it’s a useful tool, the rear view mirror provides an appropriately limited view. Our eyes should always be fixed to the path ahead.

So, what about our association? Where do we see ourselves going this year? That is the question that was placed before the Board of Directors at our meeting in December. Actually, we considered 2011 and beyond, but this year will be the springboard to new initiatives and ideas.

**Visionary Award.** Beginning with this year’s grand division meetings, TPHA Visionary Awards will be given to an individual or group in each respective region that has taken steps to improve the health of citizens in that part of the state. The focus of the first awards will be walkable communities. More information regarding nominations will soon be available.

**Social Media.** Some people love it, some people hate it, but social media is arguably the most influential form of communication today. If you’re a Facebook user, you’ll see TPHA there in the next few weeks.

**Strategic Plan.** TPHA President-Elect Dr. Marian Levy is writing a bold new strategic plan to include tangible goals over the next three years, not just a plan that guides our current year.

**Membership.** Membership Committee Chair Glenn Czarnecki is making plans to reach out to organizations and groups that historically have not been a part of TPHA.

I urge our current members to take part in these initiatives. In addition, I urge members to become more active in the association. Whether through contacting congress, recruiting new members, submitting nominations for the Visionary Award, being involved in a committee, or whatever route you choose, I ask that you help TPHA move down our new path, both this year and beyond.

(Continued from page 1) other infectious disease outbreaks; efforts to decrease the state's infant mortality rate; lowering tobacco use among young Floridians; addressing racial and ethnic health disparities; and improving overall access to medical and dental care.

As a pediatrician, Dr. Agwunobi dedicated himself to working with underserved populations. Before moving to Florida, Dr. Agwunobi was Medical Director and Vice President of Medical Affairs and Patient Services at the Hospital for Sick Children, a Washington, DC, pediatric rehabilitation hospital and community health care provider. He simultaneously served as medical director for an affiliated managed care plan, where he maintained a network of more than 2,300 physicians and specialists.

Dr. Agwunobi completed his pediatric residency at Howard University Hospital in Washington, DC, rotating between Children's National Medical Center and the District of Columbia General Hospital. In addition to his medical degree, Dr. Agwunobi holds a Master of Business Administration from Georgetown University in Washington, DC, and a Master of Public Health from Johns Hopkins School of Public Health in Baltimore, MD.

Dr. Agwunobi has been the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including Public Administrator of the Year, APHA Public Health Hero Citation, and Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

**WEST TENNESSEE GRAND DIVISION MEETING**

Submitted by: Matt McDaniel, West TN Vice President

The TPHA West Regional Conference, “Public Health: Connecting West Tennessee” will be held on Thursday, April 21st, 2011 at the University of Memphis’ spacious University Center. The Planning Committee is excited about our slate of speakers, as our conference attendees will hear from Mr. Kyle Wagenshultz on how bicycle paths connect communities, Dr. Marian Levy on how social media is arguably the most influential form of communication today, if you’re a Facebook user, you’ll see TPHA there in the next few weeks, Dr. Theresa Chapple on making strides on lowering infant mortality, along with many other engaging topics.

This conference is shaping up to be one of the best ever, and it is our hope that many of our colleagues throughout West TN will be in attendance. The cost is $10, and this includes lunch. Please do not hesitate to contact Matt McDaniel at mcdaniel@shelbycountymtn.gov if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing everyone there!”
MIDDLE TENNESSEE GRAND DIVISION MEETING
Submitted by Shannon Railling, Middle Tennessee Vice President

Planning is underway and sessions are taking shape for this year’s Middle Tennessee TPHA Grand Division meeting to be held at the Williamson County Agriculture Expo Center in Franklin on Friday, April 29, 2011. Taking a cue from the TPHA Annual Meeting theme for 2011, “Public Health: Touching Every Life, Linking Every Community”, our grand division meeting theme is “Public Health: Healthier Lives, Healthier Communities, Healthier Middle Tennessee!” Our planning committee has been hard at work contacting speakers and forming session ideas that will cover the varied focus areas and interests of our membership.

We will begin the morning with registration and continental breakfast, followed by a welcome address from our TPHA President Robert Goff. Our first session of the day will focus on the timely issue of Prescription Drug Abuse presented by Dr. Robert Pack, Associate Professor at East Tennessee State University College of Public Health. The second session will be presented by Dr. Karen Vail, Professor of Entomology at the University of Tennessee and will be a crash course on Bed Bug Basics! We will learn all we ever wanted to know about the hot topic issue that has invaded the news, but hopefully not your home or hotel! Participants will be provided a catered lunch on site, followed by a game of PublicHealthcionary- regions and metros will combine their artistic skills and public health knowledge to vie for bragging rights in this twist on Pictionary.

There will be two afternoon sessions, the first presented by Dr. Michael Warren, Director of the Maternal and Child Health Division of the Tennessee Department of Health who will present on how to raise healthy children in an unhealthy world, and Craig Shepherd, Emergency Preparedness Director for the Tennessee Department of Health, whose presentation will focus on his experience on the USS Comfort in Haiti.

EAST TENNESSEE GRAND DIVISION MEETING
Submitted by: Melissa Wolford, East Tennessee Vice President

May 6, 2011 is the date set for the East Grand Division’s Regional Meeting. We are in the process of planning a wonderful day at Calhoun’s on the River in Knoxville. Calhoun’s on the River offers a wonderful view of the Tennessee river and promises to be a great venue for our meeting. We are contacting some great speakers and hope to provide you with a day of enlightening continuing education and good company!

We look forward to seeing you there!

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED
Submitted by: Matt McDaniel, Scholarships Committee Chair

The scholarship committee is pleased to announce that they are now accepting applications for TPHA Annual Scholarships. These awards will be given to those workers in Public Health who meet the following criteria:

Three or more years of full time employment in Public Health in Tennessee.
A member of TPHA whose dues are current and who has been a member for at least one year.

Scholarships will be limited to programs that award college credit, continuing education units, or certification through a nationally recognized accrediting body or educational institution. These awards must be used to advance individual knowledge and competence in Public Health.

The application can be found on the TPHA website, under the “Scholarships” tab. Potential applicants must have their supervisor’s approval to apply. The maximum amount that can be awarded is $1,000, and all submissions must be received by June 20th, 2011.

The committee is very hopeful that many of the current TPHA members will apply for this wonderful benefit and take advantage of the multitude of educational opportunities available for those in Public Health.

Please send completed applications to:
Matt McDaniel
1075 Mullins Station Rd
Office W-230
Memphis, TN 38134

For questions, please contact Matt McDaniel at 901-379-7014.
Great news! The East Tennessee State University College of Public Health recently received federal funding to house a Public Health Training Center for the state of Tennessee! This is one of thirty three in the nation and the only one in Tennessee. The purpose of the center is to strengthen the technical, scientific, and leadership competence of Tennessee’s Public Health workforce. Through the center, we will assist working public health professionals with cost-effective opportunities for training and to further their educational goals through online and web based degree programs.

We call the Center LIFEPATH, which stands for Long-Distance Internet Facilitated Educational Program for Applied Training in Health. The Center presents a diverse offering of programs. All of the programs except the doctoral degrees can be taken exclusively online via web-based video- and audio-interactive technology.

Programs of study include:
- Online five-course (15 Credit Hour) undergraduate sequence on the fundamentals of public health
- Online Graduate Certificates-Epidemiology, Healthcare Management, and Public Health Leadership
- Online Masters of Public Health-Epidemiology and Health Services Administration
- Doctor of Public Health – Epidemiology and Community Health

Another important component of LIFEPATH is non-academic training. Non-academic training will be offered statewide through collaboration with our partners: University of Tennessee Knoxville, Meharry Medical College, and University of Memphis.

How does LIFEPATH offer cost-efficient opportunities? For those who qualify, LIFEPATH will offer stipends to offset cost-of-living expenses incurred over the course of your tenure with the program. In all but the doctoral program, you can remain a full time employee while you are enrolled in the program. LIFEPATH staff will be working closely with interested individuals to ensure that the cost accrued is curbed dramatically by use of the stipend. State of Tennessee employees will also be able to utilize their educational waiver with LIFEPATH stipends. The cost-of-living stipend and State tuition waiver greatly offset the costs of enrolling in the program.

So how much does this really cost? The overall costs vary by individual and program level. If you are interested in finding out more information about the opportunities LIFEPATH could offer you, please contact us. Our staff will be more than willing to answer your questions and to help facilitate the process of achieving your educational goals.

Please contact Paula Masters, LIFEPATH Director, at 423-439-4421 or mastersp@etsu.edu to find out more about what LIFEPATH can do for you!
evaluation of the training and outcomes. The long-term goal of Tennessee LIFEPATH is to strengthen the technical, scientific, managerial and leadership competence of Tennessee’s public health workforce.

More information about Tennessee LIFEPATH will be available at the TPHA regional meetings. Dr. Marian Levy will provide a program update at the West Tennessee Grand Division meeting on April 21st. Dr. Pack will present details at the Middle Tennessee Grand Division meeting (April 29th) and East Tennessee Grand Division meeting (May 6th). Dr. Pack may be contacted at packr@etsu.edu.
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently announced important steps to ensure that standards and guidelines on fluoride in drinking water continue to provide the maximum protection to the American people to support good dental health, especially in children. HHS is proposing that the recommended level of fluoride in drinking water can be set at the lowest end of the current optimal range to prevent tooth decay, and EPA is initiating review of the maximum amount of fluoride allowed in drinking water.

These actions will maximize the health benefits of water fluoridation, an important tool in the prevention of tooth decay while reducing the possibility of children receiving too much fluoride. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention named the fluoridation of drinking water one of the ten great public health achievements of the 20th century.

HHS and EPA reached an understanding of the latest science on fluoride and its effect on tooth decay prevention and the development of dental fluorosis that may occur with excess fluoride consumption during the tooth forming years, age 8 years and younger. Dental fluorosis in the United States appears mostly in the very mild or mild form as barely visible lacy white markings or spots on the enamel. The severe form of dental fluorosis, with staining and pitting of the tooth surface, is rare in the United States.

There are several reasons for the changes seen over time, including that Americans have access to more sources of fluoride than they did when water fluoridation was first introduced in the United States in the 1940s. Water is now one of several sources of fluoride. Other common sources include dental products such as toothpaste and mouth rinses, prescription fluoride supplements, and fluoride applied by dental professionals. Water fluoridation and fluoride toothpaste are largely responsible for the significant decline in tooth decay in the U.S. over the past several decades.

The HHS-proposed recommendation of 0.7 milligrams of fluoride per liter of water replaces the current recommended range of 0.7 to 1.2 milligrams. This updated recommendation is based on recent EPA and HHS scientific assessments to balance the benefits of preventing tooth decay while limiting any unwanted health effects. These scientific assessments will also guide EPA in making a determination of whether to lower the maximum amount of fluoride allowed in drinking water, which is set to prevent adverse health effects.

The new EPA assessments of fluoride were undertaken in response to findings of the National Academies of Science (NAS). At EPA’s request, in 2006 NAS reviewed new data on fluoride and issued a report recommending that EPA update its health and exposure assessments to take into account bone and dental effects and to consider all sources of fluoride. In addition to EPA’s new assessments and the NAS report, HHS also considered current levels of tooth decay and dental fluorosis and fluoride consumption across the United States.

HHS is expecting to publish final guidance for community water fluoridation by spring 2011. For more information about community water fluoridation, as well as information for health care providers and individuals on how to prevent tooth decay and reduce the chance of children developing dental fluorosis, visit http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation.

---

**Project Blossom: Because Too Many Babies Die Before They Have the Chance to Bloom**

Submitted by: Kimberlee Wyche Etheridge, MD, MPH, Director
Family Youth and Infant Health, Metro Public Health Department

Tennessee ranks 41st in the country for children’s overall well being. Infant mortality, defined as death of an infant before his/her first birthday, is a strong indicator of wellbeing. More families in TN plan a funeral for their infant instead of a first birthday party than in most all other states in the country. In 2000, 9.1 infants/1000 live births died across the state. In Nashville this number was 10/1000, and 19.9 for Black infants. It was during this time that MPHD formulated the need to do something different to improve the health and survival of our next generation.

(Continued on page 7)
Through a collaborative effort spearheaded by the National CityMatCH organization, MPHHD had the opportunity to learn how to address infant mortality using the Perinatal Periods of Risk analysis. PPOR is a multifaceted approach to addressing infant mortality at the level of the community. From this PPOR analysis and the resulting programmatic and community based shifts Project Blossom was born.

Project Blossom is a multidisciplinary approach to eliminating perinatal health disparities. In 2002 over 40 stakeholders came together to strategically map out a plan to address infant mortality. Three goals were established:

1. To eliminate perinatal health disparities
2. To make MCH a community priority, and
3. To improve the health of reproductive-aged women

With these three goals, we refocused programs and created others where gaps were identified and coordinated them all under the umbrella of Project Blossom.

Since this time, Project Blossom has become known across the state and across the country as a systematic approach to addressing infant mortality.

Some of the accomplishments of Project Blossom to date include improved access to prenatal care for adolescents, programs addressing responsible fatherhood, a switch to adopting a life course perspective on health, and multiple community education programs for teens, tweens, men, pregnant and post partum women.

Our local numbers have dropped from 10.0/1000 in 2000 to 8.2/1000 in 2009, and from 19.9 to 14.2 for Black infants in 2009. The Mayor signed a proclamation stating that Nashville will become the healthiest city in the state to be born, and 1000’s of girls and young women have been screened in the community and received education about the importance of their health now for their future families.

We are not there yet, but through the efforts of Project Blossom and those who have made a career out of fulfilling its goals, we are moving in the right direction.

---

PRESIDENT OBAMA SIGNS FDA
FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION ACT
Submitted by: Hugh Atkins, Director, Division of General Environmental Health

On Tuesday, January 4, President Barack Obama signed the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act into law. Among other things, the new law gives the FDA mandatory recall authority, requires food producers to have plans in place for identifying and addressing safety risks, and requires food importers to verify the safety of all imported foods. The law is an attempt to prevent, or at least reduce, the incidence of foodborne illness outbreaks. According to a report in Food Safety News, the Act received support from public health, industry, and food safety groups, as well as broad bipartisan support in Congress.

The Act also allocates resources to inspect facilities and imported food with a focus on food safety risks. The Act allows the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to enter into arrangements and agreements with foreign governments to facilitate the inspection of registered foreign facilities. Another important component of the Act directs HHS to increase the field staffs of the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, the Center for Veterinary Medicine, and the Office of Regulatory Affairs of the FDA. With the exception of the mandatory recall authority, the provisions of the Act are to be phased in over the course of the next several years. Certain establishments such as roadside stands, farmers markets, and community supported agriculture programs are exempt from the Act.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate there are 48 million cases of foodborne illnesses annually in the United States, resulting in around 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths.

While this Act provides the framework for increased defense against foodborne illness outbreaks, perhaps more importantly, it signals a long overdue emphasis on food safety and the risk factors that cause them. Hopefully, this Act will make it easier for food safety professionals and epidemiologists to determine the source and cause of foodborne illness outbreaks.

---

Save the Date!
The Southern Health Association will be meeting jointly with the North Carolina Public Health Association to celebrate NCPHA’s 100th Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held September 21 - 23 at the Charlotte Hilton University Place, Charlotte NC. Visit www.southernhealth.net for the hotel link. A conference information link will also be activated as information becomes available.

Make plans now to join us!
A moving billboard, essay contests, radio public service announcements, tobacco–free pledge posters and an interactive “Tobacco Hall of Shame” were among the numerous events and activities marking the 35th Great American Smoke Out in West TN. Youth groups prepared cessation bags for family and friends, held candle light vigils for those who have lost their lives due to tobacco and released balloons containing messages about the dangers of tobacco. Mayors proclaimed November 18 GASO Day in some counties and newspaper articles promoted free education programs and activities sponsored by health councils and community partners throughout the region. Displays addressing smoking health risks, secondhand smoke, pregnancy health risks and smokeless tobacco were also prominent throughout the region along with education and cessation resources, including the 1-800-QUITNOW Tennessee Tobacco Hotline number.

In December, TENNderCARE partnered with MCO’s and physicians to offer designated EPSDT screening events in communities in Weakley and Obion counties in West TN. The primary goal was to emphasize the need for the performance of all the components of the EPSDT exam within the medical community and the community at large in addition to immunizations. The first screening event was held in Obion County on December 1st and 2nd at the Boys and Girls Club in Union City. The second screening event was held in Weakley County on December 16th and 17th at the Tri County Family Medicine & Urgent Care Facility in Martin. A total of 41 complete screenings were conducted. Similar relationships and events will be arranged throughout rural West TN in 2011 beginning in counties with screening rates below the targeted 80%.

West TN bid Neal Caldwell a fond farewell at a retirement breakfast in his honor January 7, 2011 at the West TN Regional Office in Jackson. Neal completed 36 years of service with the Department of Health and Environment and 25 years as a member of TPHA.
EAST TENNESSEE REGION

New Tobacco-Free Policy in East Tennessee

Starting January 1, 2011, hospitals throughout East Tennessee operated by five health systems began a Tobacco-Free campus policy. The policy applies to patients, visitors, and staff and includes all hospital grounds – parking lots, parking garages, green spaces, etc. The hospital systems of Blount Memorial Hospital, Covenant Health Systems, East Tennessee Children’s Hospital, Mercy Health Partners, and the University of Tennessee Medical Center are all participating. This new policy impacts eight hospitals in Knox County and ten hospitals in the fifteen county East Tennessee Region.

The area hospitals offered smoking cessation programs or smoking cessation resources to employees in anticipation of the January 1st Tobacco-Free policy deadline. This is an important initiative for the hospitals in the East Tennessee Region, with each hospital system recognizing the importance of a Tobacco-Free campus, for the health of both employees and patients.

An issue that has come to the surface since the Tobacco-Free policy began involves the public space surrounding some of the hospitals. Smokers are now going to public sidewalks surrounding hospitals that are not self-contained, which has prompted hospital officials to look at laws surrounding use of public space.

The five hospital systems in the East Tennessee Region should be commended for their Tobacco-Free initiative.

UPPER CUMBERLAND REGION

New Upper Cumberland Regional Health Office

Upper Cumberland regional staff moved into their new facility in November 2010. The new building is located on England Drive near I-40 and Highway 111. The state building commission approved the project in 2004. The new 50,000+ square-foot facility, which provides space for the Upper Cumberland Regional Health Office staff, a regional training center and clinics, was designed and constructed to earn LEED platinum certification from the United States Green Building Council. LEED is a system for verifying that a building was designed and constructed using environmentally-friendly strategies to improve energy savings, water usage, indoor environmental quality and use of resources.
Partners in Preparedness

The South Central Region Emergency Preparedness Team has kicked off the New Year by partnering with the Texas Engineering Extension Service or TEEX, a division of Texas A & M University System to offer “Bioterrorism: Mass Prophylaxis Preparedness & Planning.” Funded by the Department of Homeland Security, the two-day workshop serves as a guide for local health officials and their partners to coordinate plans to provide mass distribution of pharmaceuticals for the jurisdiction as they relate to the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Program.

The purpose of this course is to enhance a jurisdiction’s preparedness and emergency response efforts by developing (or revising) a plan addressing an all-hazards approach towards mass prophylaxis. The course is delivered by two public health professionals and consists of a combination of lectures, small group activities and an exercise.

On February 10-11, 2011, the South Central Region will host its first class for participants in Giles, Lawrence, Marshall, and Maury counties. Three additional sessions will follow and will be scheduled throughout the year for those in the more eastern and western parts of the region.

Public Health Pioneer

Dr. Charlie Rogers of Manchester has served on the Coffee County Board of Health as the dentist representative for fifty-five consecutive years. After these many years of faithful and invaluable service, Dr. Rogers is retiring as a member of the Coffee County Board of Health. During his half century of service he has seen many improvements in the services offered by the local health departments. Dr. Rogers was instrumental in working with local officials to obtain funding to build new health departments in both Manchester and Tullahoma. He has also served on the Tennessee Board of Dentistry from 1995 to 2004. Dr. Rogers worked with South Central Health Department officials to initiate the School Based Dental Sealant Program for the twelve counties in South Central.

Born in Albertville, Alabama, in 1927, Charlie moved with his family to Manchester in 1930. The family business was farming but Charlie set his sights on dentistry. After graduating from Central High School in 1946, Charlie entered the University of Tennessee studying pre-dentistry. In 1951, he received his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from UT Memphis Dental School. After school he entered the Air Force as a captain in 1952 and served for two years as a dentist during the Korean War.

Dr. Rogers began his dental practice in Manchester and continued to practice in the County until retiring in 1999. During that time he was instrumental as a Manchester City School board member by introducing fluoride treatments and dental sealants to the Manchester, Tullahoma, and Coffee County school systems. He personally spoke with school nurses after the program began about the importance and successes declaring “kids can’t study with toothaches.”

During his five years with the school board he also teamed with fellow dentist, the late Dr. Ewing J. Threet, to bring fluoridation to the city’s water supply system while the late Dr. Clarence Farrar was mayor. Dr. Rogers has served as a member of the Manchester water and sewer commission, alderman with the city council and the City Industrial Board. As a long-time member of the Coffee County Chamber of Commerce they recently spotlighted his dedication to the community in a profile printed in the Commerce Directory.
**SOUTHEAST REGION**

The Right Bite Diabetes Cooking School has been very beneficial to the population in the Southeast Region. Southeast Tennessee has one of the highest diabetes rates in the state. Unfortunately, many people who are diagnosed with diabetes receive little or no nutrition education. They may be given a standardized diet sheet and told to follow it or simply be told to “avoid sugar”. This isn’t helpful when patients have to decide what to buy at the grocery store or what to order at a restaurant. The lack of nutrition education leaves many people with diabetes frustrated in their attempts to control blood glucose levels.

To address the lack of nutrition education, Pamela Newton, R.D., collaborated with the University of Tennessee Extension Service to present the Right Bite Diabetes Cooking School. Originally the program was a series of three classes dealing with carbohydrates and artificial sweeteners, fats and cholesterol, and sodium and fiber. Questions from participants and program evaluations led to an expansion of the curriculum. It is now four sessions with sodium and fiber separated and additional information on the other topics. Participants wanted to learn more about how carbohydrates influenced blood glucose, how to use herbs and spices to enhance flavor without adding calories, and how to modify fat in home cooking. The program has been presented in multiple locations in our region and participants have been very grateful for the practical knowledge they have gained.

If a kitchen is available at the location of the program, sessions include sample meals or select dishes that relate to the subject being discussed. The food may be prepared before the program or while the dietitian is speaking.

Interest in the program has been so positive that participants have requested additional classes such as holiday cooking or adapting recipes. To meet this need, Pamela has developed three programs that are presented in November and December. The topics include holiday cooking: desserts and modifying recipes, the party season, and restaurant survival. Pamela Newton and the Nutrition Department continue to develop ways to fill the need for nutrition education in the Southeast Region.

**MEMPHIS/SHELBY REGION**

Shelby County Health Department Holds First Ever Drive-Through Clinic

On November 20th, 2010, the Shelby County Health Department’s Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program (PHEPP) held its first ever Drive-Through Point of Dispensing (POD) exercise at Southwind High School. The exercise provided both a benefit to the public by offering free seasonal flu vaccination to all those interested as well as an opportunity for the Health Department to test its current emergency preparedness plans developed by the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI). The CRI program works to prepare Shelby County to respond to any public health emergency that requires the quick distribution of needed medicines and/or medical supplies. The goal of the CRI program is to reach 100 percent of the affected population within 48 hours of activation.

To test its emergency plans, PHEPP designed an exercise to test the Health Department’s abilities to setup and operate a POD, along with testing our capabilities in the actual dispensing of medication, which in this case was the seasonal flu vaccine. “From soup to nuts, we made sure in our preparation that we had all of the critical elements necessary to provide (preventive care) to the masses,” explained Health Department Director Yvonne Madlock. “One of our goals was to test our capacity to mobilize in the event of an emergency or bio-terroristic threat.”

PHEPP was very fortunate to have the support of a wide variety of agencies including the Shelby County Board of Education, the Shelby County Sheriff’s Office, the Shelby County Fire Department, the Mid-South Chapter of the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army of Memphis, both Methodist and Baptist Hospital systems, the Jackson-Madison County Health Department, the West Tennessee Regional Health Department, Mississippi Public Health Districts 1 and 2 and numerous Medical Reserve Corps volunteers.

“This drill [went] really well – not perfect, but great for the most part,” said Judy Martin, Incident Commander for the POD exercise. “We’ve worked to identify all of the little things that could be improved before we implement this kind of system again.”

The Drive-Through clinic was opened from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Over 250 citizens took advantage of the free flu vaccinations. By most accounts, the Health Department’s clinic far exceeded expectations and many participants were pleased with the quick speed of the entire process. “I like this way more than the doctor’s office,” citizen Stephanie Arnold said describing her experience, “and it only took five minutes.”

For more information about Shelby County Health Department’s Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program, please call (901) 379-7155.
The health councils in the Northeast Region have been very active in raising awareness and providing events on health issues in an effort to improve the health of our citizens.

Carter and Johnson County Health Councils teamed up with Tri-Cities RAM (Remote Area Medical) to offer assistance at the three day clinic in October at the Bristol Motor Speedway. Volunteers assisted with acquisition of food for volunteers and participants, parking, and other assignments. The clinic provided medical, dental, and vision services to approximately 1,700 individuals from several states.

The Greene County Health Council has concentrated their efforts in the areas of heart disease and stroke, emotional health and wellness, and cancer. They have distributed brochures on stress, stress management, anxiety, depression and suicide prevention to Tusculum College, area high schools, and the Boys & Girls Club through events. They have been instrumental in providing nutrition education, food demonstrations, and grocery shopping tips for the members of the community, developed a resource guide of agencies serving youth, and are discussing ways to implement the statewide obesity plan, Eat Well/Play More Tennessee.

The Hancock County Health Council is teaming up with Get Fit TN to provide activities within the county to increase physical activity among the citizens. While this effort is still in the infancy stages, community partners have been secured to assist with the effort. Alday Communications (Get Fit TN contractor) has been involved in the planning stages as well.

The Hawkins County Health Council with assistance from the American Heart Association, health department and UT Extension Service teamed up to offer heart disease, stroke and cholesterol information at a local industry where approximately 400 (of which 125 were Hispanic) employees were reached. Members of the Boys & Girls Club were provided programs/information on nutrition and physical activity with the assistance of community partners. Breast Cancer Awareness was provided through various avenues within Hawkins County primarily at businesses and industries. Members of the Unicoi County Health Council were instrumental in planning, recruiting volunteers and services needed for a RAM clinic. A total of 240 volunteers provided services to 745 individuals with the value of care estimated at $215,094.

The Washington County Health Council is working with the Department of Environment and Conservation to provide community members with information on radon and the importance of home testing. Billboard space has been acquired to be displayed throughout the month of January in this awareness effort. Proclamations have been signed by the city and county mayors proclaiming January as Radon Awareness Month.

All counties within the region have completed the community assessments. Each health council has been presented the findings for their county and has been charged with developing a strategic plan based on the assessment findings and county data.

The region recently lost approximately 75 years of service with the retirement of Dr. Lawrence Moffatt, Regional Medical Director (40+ yrs.), October 2010 and our Assistant Regional Director, Judy Holden (34 ½ yrs.), January 2011. They will be missed along with their expertise and compassion for public health.
MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE EVENTS

Tennessee Public Health Association
Annual Educational Conference
“Public Health: Touching Every Life, Linking Every Community”
September 14-16, 2011
Cool Springs Marriott Hotel and Convention Center
Franklin, TN

West Tennessee Meeting
"Public Health: Connecting West Tennessee"
April 21, 2011
University Center
University of Memphis
Memphis, TN

Middle Tennessee Meeting
“Public Health: Healthier Lives, Healthier Communities, Healthier Middle Tennessee!”
April 29, 2011
Williamson County Ag Center
Franklin, TN

East Tennessee Meeting
May 6, 2011
Calhouns on the River
Knoxville, TN

Southern Health Association Meeting
September 21-23, 2011
Charlotte Hilton University Place
Charlotte, NC

American Public Health Association
139th Annual Meeting & Exposition
October 29- November 2, 2011
“Healthy Communities Promote Healthy Minds & Bodies”
Washington, DC