

From the Director



It is hard to believe that we are already beginning our 4th month of 2005. The memories of last year are still fresh in our minds. From the hurricanes to the unprecedented flu season new challenges became a part of everyone's job, and you have all preformed above and beyond the call of duty. Brevard County Health Department employees continue to exceed my expectations while working as a team providing our services. This is especially true as

we are just now getting back to normal with the restoration of our buildings and clinic facilities.

Although the "storms of 2004" overshadowed many things, one memory from last year stands out. In July I went to Minnesota with our Volunteer Adult Dental program coordinator, Darlene Cherepon to receive two awards from NACCHO, the National Association of County and City Health Officials. These awards were for the creativity and innovation of our staff creating "Model Practices" in the areas of cervical cancer screening and the volunteer adult dental program. I was very proud because we had been selected for two awards out of 29 nation-wide awards. These two model practices were also honored at Florida's Quality Showcase in March of this year. Darlene also received an award for her critical role in the Volunteer Adult Dental Clinic.

Last year, we cancelled the General Staff Meeting because of the demands of the flu season. This has always been a good time of getting together and catching up on all the latest news. We have now set a date for this year's first General Staff meeting. It will be on May 27 at F. Burton Smith Park in West Cocoa. This meeting will be dedicated to employee wellness and I understand that our Office of Performance Improvement and the Chronic Disease Prevention program have some great things lined up for our entire staff. Mark that date on your calendar.

In addition, I would like to extend my appreciation for your United Way donations this year. Brevard County Health Department has exceeded our contribution goal two consecutive years in the United Way Campaign. I am proud that you made this possible. Brevard County Health Department employees are the best!

Heidar Heshmati, MD, MPH, PhD, Director

STEP UP, FLORIDA



The Step Up, Florida Event on February 24th was a great success. Brevard County had 16 organizations that partnered with us to carry the flag through the South Brevard community. Our route was influenced by the fact that we handed off the flag to Osceola, our neighboring county to the west. Throughout the day with almost 200 participants, the flag moved 317 people miles during 168 people hours of activity. With the Space Coast Crew rowing the flag across the Indian River, we even logged nautical miles. We had three schools involved in carrying the flag by running, jogging and jump-roping. What a sight!

Continued on page 4

Florida State Employees' Charitable Campaign



The Brevard County Health Department has done something that no other health department has done and not many others have accomplished during the Florida State Employees' Charitable Campaign (FSECC). That is to substantially exceed the goal set by their organization, for us the Department of Health. This feat was accomplished

through the tremendous giving by our staff. A big "THANK YOU" from all the organizations that will benefit by your giving. The nuts and bolts of your giving was extraordinary. The combined giving for 2003 and 2004 was just under \$16,000. In 2003 we had 88 givers and in 2004 it went up by 63% to 143. In 2003 we came in at 111.4% over the state goal and in 2004 we were up by almost 18% and came in at 131% over the state goal for Brevard.

Continued on Page 2

Florida State Employees' Charitable Campaign Con't from page 1

When looking at the big picture for the years we have been a part of the FSECC this tremendous giving was not the norm. The overlying reason for our great success in this campaign is the very committed work of Jay Rudy. Jay has, for 3 year been the "coordinator" for the FSECC. During those 3 years our success has been record breaking. Jay's first year 1997 was the first record breaking year since we've been involved in the FSECC. Other coordinators have given it their all and have done a great job, but Jay has had the "right stuff" to put us over the top.



Jay Rudy Recognized by Dr. Heshmati and Management Team

First, Jay has supervisory support with his boss, Bruce Pierce. In fact, Jay and Bruce have been the force behind the BBQ lunch they host for the unit with the highest per capita giving. Last year (2003) the Annex scooped Admin. This past year (2004) Admin just squeaked by WIC and the Annex. THANK YOU JAY AND BRUCE! Second, Jay's wife has been the creative force behind the challenges and incentives Jay has used to encourage giving. Yep! Remember 1998 when Jay sported the little diamond earring. That wasn't a fashion statement but making good on a promise that if BCHD exceeded its FSECC goal, he would get an ear pierced. Then again, in 2003, Jay was going to make a real fashion statement but the "powers that be" encouraged him to "stand down" Thanks, Jay; we didn't need to see those hairy legs. Now again in 2004 with less "penash" but great effectiveness, Jay offered gives a chance for some fantastic prizes as encouragement to give a little deeper. This was quite an effort with 85 gifts valued at over \$1,000. Again it was a winner which launched us into the record books.

Giving to charitable organizations is close to Jay's heart. He was involved in coordinating the charitable campaign in the military for 13 years. This year the United Way as asked Jay to be on a Community Impact team. This and other teams will go out to the various organizations to see how the United Way funds are making a difference. Jay chose the committee for organizations that "nurture children and youth".

At the March 24th Management meeting, Dr Heshmati presented Jay with a plaque for his outstanding work and commitment toward the positive difference that the Florida State Employees Charitable Campaign makes on our community.

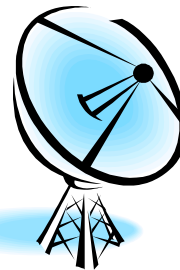
THANK YOU, JAY!

National Public Health Week

Public health advancements and new treatment options are enabling Americans to live longer. The average life expectancy in the United States is now 74 years for men and 78 years for women. Nevertheless, it is not only important to live longer but to be stronger and healthier. Today, many individuals and their families, as well as communities and policy makers are missing opportunities to take the preventive actions necessary to keep aging Americans stronger and healthier throughout their latter years. As a result, older Americans often endure chronic physical and mental illnesses that could be avoided or diminished if they were more proactively addressed. At the American Public Health Association (APHA), we believe that it is never too late to address these issues. **National Public Health Week 2005 will focus on empowering Americans to live stronger, longer!** During NPHW, APHA and its partners will promote the three Ps in adding more healthy years to life:

Prevent, Protect and Plan.

Georges C. Benjamin, MD, FACP
Executive Director
American Public Health Association



Teleconference and Distance Learning Program

Health Education has been actively involved in the DOH Teleconference Program. There are many programs that we record that are excellent public health topics, however, because of time and schedule BCHD staff are not able to attend the program. These tapes are available for loan to BCHD staff for a limited time. If you are interested in learning more or seeing a list of topics, **call Health Education at 634-6368**

Topics for 2005

- Assessing Chemical Exposure
- Infection Control Update
- Weapons of Mass Destruction
 - Prevention and Deterrence
 - Chemical
 - Biological
 - Nuclear and Radiological
- Contraceptive Technologies
- Folic Acid-Past Present and Future
- Vaccine Shortages
- Making Nutrition Education Fun
- 4 in O4 Public Health Preparedness
- Epidemiology of Vaccine Preventable Diseases



employee health and wellness staff meeting

may 27 f. burton smith park. cocoa

1:30 - 4:15



The Disney Marathon

Have you ever thought of doing something really wild, like run a marathon? Well, our very own Jennifer Heller did, at this years running of the Disney Marathon. Jennifer is a nutritionist with the School Health Program. Jennifer and 26,000 other participants lined up on January 9th at 6:00 AM at Disney's Epcot Center to await the starting gun for the 26.2 mile journey through 5 Disney theme parks. Now Disney is no stranger to large crowds but 26,000 people is more folks than in the whole city of Rockledge. How'd they do it? Jennifer said that they divided people up into "corrals" according to their ability and previous times; faster runners at the beginning and on back to Corral F. Wheel chair competitors had a 10 minute head start. Since Jennifer was in corral E, it took her 30 minutes to reach the starting line to begin and for the first 13 miles the crowd was so thick, she had difficulty running at her regular pace.

Jennifer ran the 26.2 mile course in 4 hours and 32 minutes. Since this was Jennifer's first marathon I asked what was her inspiration. She flashed a big smile and said her grandmother. You see, Jennifer's grandmother was a stroke survivor. So when a card came in the mail from the American Stroke Association (ASA) looking for people to sponsor in the Disney marathon she "answered the call". Part of the sponsorship was for Jennifer to raise "dollars" for the ASA. From family and friends, she raised \$2,200 for the ASA. The ASA in turn provided the experienced coaches, mentors and clinics on injury prevention, nutrition and apparel to prepare the runners. Seven people from Brevard were sponsored

by the ASA. Jennifer's coach was Laura Davis, a teacher from Roosevelt Middle School. They worked hard for 5 months, starting slowly in August with 4 mile runs four days a week and a long run on the week ends. During the training Jennifer worked up to a 22 mile long run. After that, the long weekend runs began to shorten allowing her body to build back up for the marathon. Jennifer said that by completing the 22 mile run her confidence was running high and knew she could run the distance.

On a very sad note, during the training Jennifer's grandmother passed away. The excitement and support that her grandmother gave Jennifer now became an inspirational force that propel her through the remainder of the training and on to the 26.2 miles of the run.

On the day of the marathon, Jennifer prepared by eating 2 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and checking the batteries in her I-pod. The energy from the PB and J would run out quickly so she Clif Bars, one half every 5 miles and lots of water. Jennifer said that the race was very mental. Some runners plan and list things to think about during the run to keep their mind from concentrating on the discomfort that can occur. Jennifer said that she loves her music and so the I-pod was her mental distraction throughout the race.

I had to ask, since this was her first marathon, would she do another. Quick as a wink, she said yes. She will be entering the Chicago Marathon on her own. The Chicago run is on October 9th, so Jennifer will be starting training in June. "It was an awesome experience. The support of my family, the inspiration of my grandmother and the crowds rooting for you along the route made it a tremendous experience." I asked Jennifer if the marathon influenced other things and she answered, "Yes, the confidence level in other areas increases when you have completed a major accomplishment. I guess because it draws a person's inner strength out in open."

We may not all be ready to jump at the opportunity to run a marathon, but I'll bet that some of you have some "big" dreams. Jennifer's story may be the nudge needed for you to begin to plan in earnest to accomplish that dream. I hope so. **Jennifer we all congratulate you on your Disney marathon run.**



Our Walking Challenge is changing lives, one-step at a time.



A few weeks before the December holidays, it took some coaching for Latrice to sign up to participate in the Employee Wellness program Walking Challenge with some of her peers. The walking group uses the mid-morning and mid-afternoon 15-min break to walk in the neighborhood near the health department. At the beginning of the challenge Latrice felt she could not leave her office, even 15 minutes, because she felt she was so busy, but before long, Latrice became the group's informal leader. She brought in walking shoes to change into and rounded up her peers nearly every day at the precise break times.

Our Walking Challenge is changing lives, one-step at a time.

Continued from page 3



Since starting to walk, Latrice states that her energy level is up and she is much more alert at work. "The walking breaks have made my day less stressful and I have met many different people during my walks", Latrice said. Latrice is also full time student enrolled in four classes so

she can graduate in July with her Baccalaureate. "At school, now I can run up two flights of stairs without being exhausted where before I would had a hard time making it up the first flight", Latrice proudly states.

One of the biggest changes Latrice has made in her lifestyle is, before started the walking challenge, Latrice would get home from class at 9:30PM and cook herself a full meal. "Before the challenge, I would fry everything, like fried chicken and pork chops, now I bake them. More importantly, I now eat my dinner meal before class and when I get home after class at night I only have a piece of fruit and water before I go to bed", Latrice said. She also went on to say, "Now I rest very well at night".

Although Latrice is the name we have used to protect her real identity, her results and statements are true. Latrice states she has dropped two dress sizes since starting the walking challenge and will continue her lifestyle changes, one-step at a time.

Congratulations, Latrice!

Employee Wellness is only one component of the DOH Chronic Disease Health Promotions and Education program interventions directed by Loretta Goggin, the health educator serving both Brevard and Osceola county health departments. The other chronic disease prevention areas are Diabetes, Heart Disease and Stroke, Adult and Adolescent Tobacco Use, Fitness and Activity, and Nutrition and Obesity.

For more information on the Chronic Disease Health Promotions and Education initiatives in Brevard County, contact Loretta Goggin at (321) 634-6378. Also, watch the BCDH Intranet for the Employee Wellness page coming soon.

STEP UP, FLORIDA

Con't from page 1

The plan from DOH is to continue Step Up, Florida for next year. We will keep you posted. To all the staff who assisted with Step Up, my sincerest thanks for all your hard work.

Jim Richardson
Loretta Goggin



NEWS FROM THE ROCKLEDGE CLINIC

We have started having" all "staff meetings on the 2nd Friday of the month. This includes WIC, Medical Records, and Nursing.

Employee of the Month

We have an employee of the month award, in which the employee chosen receives a beautiful desk plaque in recognition of "soaring above expectations" . The employee keeps it for the month and it is passed on to the next employee who is honored.



"Rising star" Recipients

Lori Foster,
Debra Byrd,
Ester Williams

During these meetings we discuss improvements needed and discuss suggestions offered. Our current project is planning an Open House on 4/8 for Public Health week.

We are also happy to have Jane-anne Simmons as our new Medical Records Supervisor. We feel that we have a great team and will pursue more efficient client service, as well as have employees who know they are appreciated.



The PULSE will be coming out on a regular basis. Please use the PULSE to communicate the great things that are happening at your office. If you have a story idea or see a great picture, either submit it, or let me know and I will help you. The "stuff" in the PULSE is great when it comes from YOU!

Jim Richardson