

**Brevard County Health Department Newsletter—Issue: July 2007**



**2007 NACCHO Awards**

**Cruise Ship Rapid Immunization Response**

Brevard County Health Department's

*Cruise Ship Rapid Immunization Response* process has achieved national honors and recognition by the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) as a **Model Practice for 2007**. This Model Practice represents the coordinated effort of many dedicated employees and partner organizations, including: BCHD's Epidemiology Department, Immunization Team, Clinic Nurses and staff, Administrative staff and partners include: the FDOH Laboratory, FDOH Immunizations, and the CDC. The Brevard County Health Department serves as a public health leader by bringing together local, state, and federal partners to create a rapid multi-agency response to address disease outbreaks on cruise ships. This model has been successfully deployed in 1997, 2002, and 2006 and has an impressive track record of ensuring the immediate containment and immunization of crew, notification of passengers, counseling and education, protection of the port and community, and continues to serve to promote prevention strategies by the cruise industry in the future.



**Coordinated Care Special Needs Shelter**

Brevard County Health Department's *Coordinated Care Special*

*Needs Shelters (CCSNS)* collaborative was also awarded **Model Practice for 2007** by the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) for its use of collaboration within the community and ease of replication. The goal of this preparedness model is to ensure the health, welfare, and safe return home for all sheltered citizens. Victorious events of this network of care were successfully demonstrated in the 2004 hurricane season, when Brevard County expertly sheltered and safely shepherded home, or to safe havens, 100% of our most vulnerable citizens on three separate occasions back to back. Unique to Brevard County, the CCSNS works through a network of collaborative efforts, championed by the BCHD, and supported by our county government, school district, emergency management, and medical partners. Applauded by the Agency for Health Care Administration, and now recognized as a national model by NACCHO, it represents an easy, common sense, replicable solution to safeguarding our most frail but independent members of society. In light of other national disasters with unstructured planning and untested models of care, the public health success of the CCSNS is very clear. The relatively simple and economic implementation of the Coordinated Care Special Needs Shelter model by other communities can prevent unnecessary morbidity and mortality.



**From the Director**

We are proud to add two more NACCHO Model Practice Awards ("Cruise Ship Rapid Immunization Response" and "Coordinated Care Special Needs Shelter") to our long list of distinctions giving us a total of nine NACCHO Model Practice Awards, since 2003. What a remarkable achievement by an exceptional team of dedicated employees and partners! This demonstrates the ingenuity of our employees and the commitment of our community partners.

More good news—on July 19th, Senator Posey and our County Commissioners joined us in our groundbreaking ceremony for the new Central Brevard County Health Department Clinic in Viera. It has been a long journey, and we and the citizens of Brevard will benefit from this new centralized clinic location.

Special Visit—on November 9, 2007, we will be honored to have the State Surgeon General, Dr. Viamonte Ros visit our facilities. She will share her vision with us during her "3-P's Tour—Preparedness, Prevention, and Personal Responsibility."

The Governor has asked every state agency to cut their budget by 10%, because of the revenue projection shortfall. Unfortunately, we may have to reduce or eliminate some services. This will be a challenge and we will make the adjustment as smooth as possible. Your hard work and commitment is always appreciated.

*Thank you—Dr. Heshmati*

**Florida Department of Health**

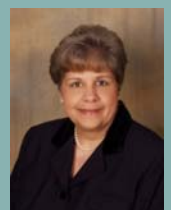


Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., MPH, was named Florida Department of Health's first State Surgeon General by Governor Charlie Crist in January 2007. She is the first woman and the first Cuban American to hold this position. We are excited to announce that she will be visiting us, here in Brevard, on

November 9, 2007 as part of her 3 P's Tour: Prevention, Preparedness, and Personal Responsibility.

**Mark your calendar!!!**

Lillian Rivera, RN, MSN accepted the position of Deputy State Health Officer as of June 2007. She is the former Administrator of Miami-Dade County, and is the current President of the Florida Sterling Council.



# GROUND BREAKING

For the New  
Central Brevard County  
Health Department  
In Viera

Under a cloudy sky with claps of thunder booming from an approaching storm, a group of about 30 gathered at the site of the new Central Brevard County Health Department building in Viera. Marking the next step in the journey, Dr. Heshmati, invited dignitaries from the Florida Legislature, the County Commission, Dr. William Knappenberger, Medical Director for the Children's Medical Services, and health department management staff to don a hard hat, grab a shovel and break ground for the health department's new clinic building. Before the crowd disbanded as the thunder clouds grew menacingly close, Florida Senator Bill Posey addressed the crowd. His words were ones of support and encouragement. Brevard County Commission Chairperson Jackie Colon and Commissioner Mary Bolin told of the good working relationship between the county and health department and how essential this new facility will be to Brevard. Just 20 minutes from the beginning with the ground now officially broken and people leaving, the rain began to fall. A step closer, the journey continues.



## Not Just Another Day At the Office

**A** mother walked in with her 3 year old daughter on a typically busy day at our Melbourne Pediatric Clinic. On first impression, she appeared anxious with her arm held protectively over her daughter's chest. Her demeanor was wary as she stated, "We've never been here before." The staff has grown accustomed to this protective and, oftentimes, defensive stance. In response, the nurses and providers usually sit down, smile, and relay upbeat reassurances such as, "OK, let's see what we can do to be of help." "We truly want you to feel good about our services...." The mother burst into tears. She wept, "I just can't believe we're here at the health department for my little girl. We've lost everything! We are new to this area and I didn't know where else to go." Sadly, this is frequently the case. Unfortunately, we are witnessing the number of uninsured clients increasing daily. It requires the gentle support of all involved to maintain the necessary sensitivity to the new client's stress.

The family was from Missouri. The child (we'll call her Maria) had allergies and had been placed on asthma medication prior to the loss of insurance. Her prescription was never filled due to financial limitations. Her cough had worsened, especially at night, and she her struggles to breathe were alarming. Maria was treated, but eventually, she required specialty care. Continued on Page 4

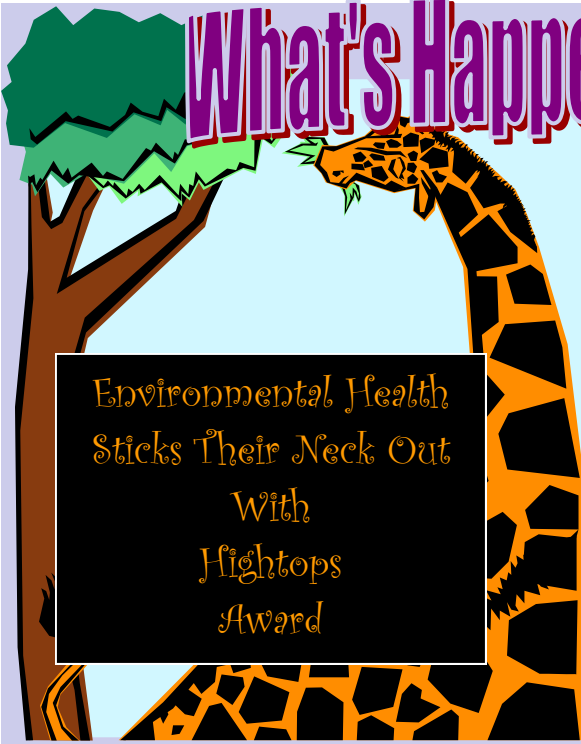


## Emergency Contact Information

Effective October 2, you can go to: [www.hsmv.state.fl.us](http://www.hsmv.state.fl.us) to register your personal emergency contact information for use by police and fire departments in case you are ever seriously injured (i.e., auto accident) and unable to communicate. You may provide 2 emergency contact names with up to three phone numbers and addresses of your contacts. Police and fire rescue will be able to pull up your contact information by using your driver's license number. At the website, just click on the Emergency Contact Information icon. It is very simple and quick to enter this vital information.

*Submitted by: Jay Rudy*

# What's Happening In Environmental Health



Environmental Health  
Sticks Their Neck Out  
With  
Hightops  
Award



## 2007 BREVARD REGISTERED SANITARIAN STUDY GROUP FORMED



Brevard County Health Department's Environmental Health Services kicked off a statewide Registered Sanitarian (RS) Study Group. This group was formed to support Brevard Environmental Health Services (EHS) team members in obtaining the nationally recognized RS credential. A Registered Sanitarian credential reflects the highest level of expertise and competence in the environmental health profession. Some benefits of obtaining this credential include enhancing individual job skills, adding value to the department, and offering customers better quality services. With the assistance of Brevard's IT Department, EHS was able to offer this study group to all interested members using Microsoft Live Meeting and our conference call capabilities.

Brevard EHS has several members participating in this 15 week course. They are: Eric Addington, Tasneem Ahmed-Wolfe, Bruce Beckett, Tim Carroll, Elaine Ferestad, Sean Flynn, Cheryl Frazier, Christine Laga, George Lambert, Cindy Leckey, Jill Love, Anthony Makielski, Karen McFee, Christie McNamara, Jeremy Rogus, Don Steele, Debora Vincent, and Mary Young. These participants are to be commended for their team work, motivation, and commitment to improving their education and the department. They are doing an outstanding job preparing for this exam!

*Submitted by Melissa Brock, R.E.H.P*

**Melissa Brock, Environmental Health Manager gives Hightops Award to staff that stick their neck out for others.**



The first **Hightops Award** went to Anthony Makielski who spent long hours, late nights, and weekends making sure that Environmental Health ran smoothly while another supervisor was out with extended medical leave.

Bridget Mailloux, Environmental



Health's second Hightops recipient. With a week to go and a General Services Audit



looming near, Bridget stepped up to the plate and hit a home run with great ideas and above-and-beyond cooperation. Bridget is a real team player and often provides needed feedback and ideas to supervisors and management at Environmental Health on how to improve processes to make Environmental Health run smoother still!

# Congratulations!

Environmental Health  
Employee of the Quarter  
Jan – March 2007

**Lynda Redmon**

Lynda may be the most tenured Brevard County Health Department employee of our Environmental Health Program employed with this program since 1991, and certainly deserving of this award.

*Congratulations Lynda!*



# Not Just Another Day At the Office

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The BCHD Kid Care advisor immediately pulled her resources together. Her timing was phenomenal! The provider was able to refer the child for her exam, which resulted in the removal of her tonsils. Her improvement was dramatic.

Maria's mother, (we'll call her Mrs. Martinez), demonstrated an increased confidence in our services. We slowly began treating her other three children. Trust ensued and a healthy bond was established.

One particular visit, the Brevard Community College (BCC) nursing students were present for their clinical rotation in the Pediatric clinic. We discussed school and the benefits of returning to school despite obvious hardships someone like Mrs. Martinez might face. She was clearly considering our input as she asked questions and expressed her concerns. Doctors, nurses, and technicians alike all chimed in to offer support in any way if Mrs. Martinez opted to return to school. One provider relayed, "It's your ticket to a better life for yourself and your children" while nurses cheerfully joined in, stating, "You go Girl!"

With encouragement, Mrs. Martinez enrolled at BCC. We adjusted her medical visits to fit her hectic and stressful schedule. We called in the evening to make sure our care was effective. The sleepless nights for her were many. Often she would come to see us with her sick children after a long night shift with books in hand. We cared for her children with compassion and regard for her efforts.

Over time, we learned Mrs. Martinez had completed her studies at BCC and was accepted at the University of Central Florida. She chose to dedicate her life to the teaching profession. We continued to encourage her. Over a three-year period, we literally became her cheerleaders - helping her in any way we could.

One day, Mrs. Martinez came to our clinic without her children. She was smiling. She handed the clinic provider an envelope. It was an invitation to her University of Central Florida graduation—with honors!

It's been a long and winding road for Mrs. Martinez. She was a woman in need of medical care and support. This health department was there for her. When Mrs. Martinez invited us to her graduation, in a small way, we all felt a bit responsible for her success. For a brief, shining moment, we witnessed the triumph of a dream realized.

*Submitted by: Liz Loika on behalf of the dedicated team at the Melbourne Clinic.*

# The Inside Story at BCHD

## Squirrel Attack ? Both Sides Speak Out. (Rockledge, AP)

On Wednesday, June 6th, a Brevard County Health Department employee, William "Wild Bill" Alkire, was assaulted by a member of the City Squirrel Association. The attack occurred at approximately 8:10 a.m. while in the rear of the Rockledge Clinic on Cedar Street. Witness accounts vary, but the police are investigating it as a



Chippy The Squirrel

possible hate crime. "I was just minding my own business when this squirrel jumped on my leg and then bit both my arms, but I was finally able to shoo him off" stated Alkire. However, eye witnesses tell a different story. One William Tyler stated, "I saw Wild Bill taunting the defenseless creature with cries of 'git you overgrown rat, git' and 'you want a piece of me?'" Another witness stated he threw a large bag of garbage at the animal. "I couldn't bear to watch." This same witness was later found consoling "Chippy" the squirrel, and tending his wounds. However, both witnesses are well-known squirrel sympathizers and their motives are in question. Further reports include witnesses that observed Mr. Tyler speaking to large groups of squirrels earlier that day and pointing at Mr. Alkire while making slashing gestures at his throat. At last update, the squirrel was being treated at the local medical center and was unavailable for comment, but his attorney's written statement alleges that Mr. Alkire's actions were unprovoked, and that Chippy "only sought to help Mr. Alkire with the removal of stitches he recently incurred during the infamous Soda Machine incident." The Regional Association for Tame Squirrels (RATS) has also issued a statement in support of Chippy, accusing Alkire of being a "blatant foe of nature." Mr. Alkire's wounds were treated at the clinic and he was enrolled in the upcoming Squirrel Tolerance & Cultural Awareness Class. See Trak-It for details. *(Bill's injuries were not serious & his supervisor submitted this tongue-in-cheek—thanks for the laugh)*



George Jackow and the Super Hand—Hand Hygiene project recently won two awards from the Florida Extension Association for Family and Consumer Sciences in the category of Food Safety and Television



George represents the Brevard County Health Department in the Central Florida Food Safety Education Partnership where he has been a member for eight years.