

Keeping bird flu out of the United States and Iowa

By Susan Brockus (IDPH) and David Schmitt (IDALS)*

Recently it has seemed difficult to escape the extensive media coverage of the H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza ("bird flu") in Asia and its recent spread to some eastern European countries. The real concern, of course, is how we might escape the actual illness.

This is a valid concern. The chance that the H5N1 bird flu will spread to the U.S. and cause disease in poultry or humans, however, remains low.

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) want to inform the public about what measures are being taken to prevent H5N1 avian influenza from spreading to the U.S.



Since the 1930s, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has worked with state agriculture agencies, veterinarians, and livestock and poultry producers to prevent, control, and eradicate many animal diseases. In regard to avian influenza, Agriculture Deputy Secretary Chuck Conner noted that USDA has worked to prepare for and prevent outbreaks in the U.S. for more than two decades.

"Attacking the disease at its source overseas is a main focus for USDA," Conner said during an Oct. 26 briefing at which the agency's efforts to protect the U.S. were outlined. "USDA also has strict

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JEL receives national awards

By Joyce Allard*

For the fourth consecutive year, public health media professionals from across the U.S. have named JEL-Just Eliminate Lies, Iowa's youth-led tobacco campaign, as one of the best public health campaigns in the country. The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and ZLRIGNITION, the Des Moines marketing firm assisting the department with tobacco outreach efforts, received six awards from the National Public Health Information Coalition (NPHIC) at the group's recent annual meeting in Atlanta.

The awards were presented to Iowa for the JEL Web site, two television spots, a billboard, a mall kiosk poster and for the "Shoes" campaign. Iowa was one of the top states honored with six awards. A total of 75 awards were given to public health departments in 23 states for communications and marketing efforts in the past year.

Bonnie Mapes, director of the IDPH Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control said, "The percentage of children who are smokers has been declining in Iowa at a much faster rate than in the nation as a whole and remains

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More health care facilities move toward tobacco-free campuses

By Bobbie Bohnsack*

Many hospitals throughout Iowa have implemented tobacco-free campuses and many more plan to do so in the near future. The policies address everything from break times to how smokers smell when returning to work from breaks or lunch.

The rationale for hospitals moving toward a tobacco-free campus is simple. Tobacco use is known as the single most preventable cause of death and disease in the United States. With the implementation of tobacco-free campuses, hospitals are sending a clear message that they serve to provide the best care possible, and that does not include tobacco use.

On Nov. 17, the Grinnell Regional Medical Center began prohibiting tobacco use by employees, patients, and visitors anywhere in the building or on the grounds of the hospital.

"This is not just implementing a policy about tobacco use," said Davis Ness, vice-president for operations. "It has required us to make decisions based on equality and fairness, and recruitment and retention."

The implementation of the policy coincided with this year's Great American Smokeout, a day when smokers across the United States put a plan in place to conquer their addiction to a product that kills more than 440,000 Americans each year.

Methodist, Lutheran, Blank, Mercy and Broadlawns hospitals will also implement a tobacco-free campus on July 1 of next year. Administrators say that they felt it was necessary to provide a healthy environment for their employees, patients and visitors, and demonstrate the overall commitment to improving health while helping to lower the cost of healthcare. The University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics also plans to implement a tobacco-free campus on the same date.

At present, there are an additional 12 hospitals that have announced the implementation of tobacco-free campuses on or before July 1, 2006. Still other hospitals are forming committees and determining an implementation date.

"Tobacco is responsible for the deaths of 4,400 Iowans each year," said Iowa Department of Public Health Director Dr. Mary Mincer Hansen R.N., Ph.D. "We commend these hospitals for implementing a tobacco-free campus and including a plan to help individuals quit smoking. As a result, more Iowans will be provided the resources they need to quit smoking, and will be able to give their co-workers and loved ones a healthier environment in which to live and work."

**Bobbie Bohnsack is a health consultant for the Tobacco Use Prevention & Control Division.*



State TB Control Program benefits from rapid testing

By Allan Lynch*

In their effort to continually improve services, the University Hygienic Laboratory (UHL) has begun offering the Mycobacterium Tuberculosis Direct (MTD) test. This test makes it possible to identify *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex within 48 hours. The Iowa Department of Public Health Tuberculosis (TB) Control Program provides funding for this test.

This is good news since the MTD test helps clinicians make correct diagnoses in a much shorter period of time. The detection and reporting of TB is a key element in stopping the transmission of *M. tuberculosis* because it leads to prompt initiation of effective multiple-drug treatment, which rapidly reduces infectiousness.

The MTD test is intended for use with specimens from patients who are showing signs and symptoms consistent with active pulmonary tuberculosis, and is used in addition to acid fast bacillus (AFB) smears and cultures.

The distinguishing feature of the MTD test is that it detects *M. tuberculosis* rRNA directly and rapidly while



Mycobacterium tuberculosis

delivering the sensitivity of a culture. The test is specific for *M. tuberculosis* complex. UHL continues to perform cultures due to the need for drug susceptibility information on isolates of *M. tuberculosis* and the speciation of the bacterium complex.

The benefits to the state TB Control Program and local health departments have already been enormous. The MTD has helped clinicians rule out TB in some cases and saved health departments numerous staff hours investigating and evaluating close contacts to patients.

In other cases, early and accurate diagnosis of TB resulted in prompt evaluation of close contacts who were exposed to infectious patients. For more information, contact at UHL at 319-335-4500, or the TB Control Program at 515-281-7504.

**Allan Lynch works in the IDPH Bureau of Disease Prevention and Immunization as manager of the Tuberculosis Control Program.*

Award honors rural health activist

By Sandy Briggs*

Cheryll Jones of Bloomfield, Iowa, was recently given the first annual Jerry Karbeling Award by the Iowa Rural Health Association Board. The award is given to honor the memory of Jerry Karbeling, who worked as an advocate for rural health in Iowa and across the U.S. until his untimely death last year. The award promotes the work done by those who exhibit the same traits.

Jones has more than 30 years of work experience and is currently employed as a health services coordinator at the Ottumwa Regional Center of Child Health Specialty Clinics. She is also a pediatric nurse practitioner at Ottumwa Pediatrics. During the award presentation, outgoing Iowa Rural Health Association President, Janan Smith, described Jones as a strong advo-



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NACCHO rolls out Operational Definition of a local public health department

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) recently completed its landmark project to develop their "Operational Definition" of local public health departments. The Operational Definition is a broad framework to describe functions of local governmental public health departments. Included with the document is a set of 10



standards that describe the responsibilities that all persons, regardless of where they live, should reasonably expect their local public health department to fulfill. The definition and standards are framed around the oft-cited 10 essential public health services, and are consistent with the National Public Health Performance Standards. More than 600 public health professionals and local and state officials across the country contributed to crafting the documents. For more information, visit

www.naccho.org/topics/infrastructure/operationaldefinition.cfm.

On the lookout for bird flu

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importation restrictions to prevent the spread of the virus in our country and an elaborate surveillance system in place to monitor our bird populations."

It is also important to note that almost all poultry and poultry products (chicken, turkey, eggs, etc.) consumed in the U.S. are produced domestically. Because prevention, control, and eradication of animal diseases have been key goals for USDA and poultry and livestock producers, proper biosecurity and best management practices have been used and promoted for years.

In Iowa, poultry coming into the state must be inspected and meet strict animal admission requirements. In addition, biosecurity education has been conducted with poultry producers in Iowa and throughout the U.S.

One such public education and outreach campaign is "Biosecurity for the Birds," available online at www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/birdbiosecurity. The Web site educates bird owners about properly protecting their birds from illness, and provides tips on how to recognize two bird diseases in particular: exotic Newcastle disease and highly pathogenic avian influenza. Producers and bird owners are also advised to report sick birds to USDA's toll-free number (1-866-536-7593), and to their state's agriculture or veterinary agency.

Further public education is conducted at the state level in Iowa. This includes the annual distribution of posters with emergency contact numbers by IDALS district field staff at all hatcheries and chick stores to increase awareness about highly pathogenic avian influenza.

Another tool for reducing animal illness and death, and minimizing economic impact is surveillance. USDA and IDALS have had active ongoing surveillance programs in place to monitor poultry throughout the U.S. and in Iowa for various types of avian influenza since April 2003. To date, H5N1 has not been detected in the United States in any humans, poultry, wild birds or other animals. As for migratory birds, USDA scientists have been conducting tests in the Alaska flyway since 1998.

Iowa also has the Poultry Emergency Response Disease Plan, which is a cooperative effort between IDALS and a progressive, proactive Iowa poultry industry. The plan provides a framework for inter-agency collaboration and communication to safeguard animal and human health; prevent disease in animals and humans; detect disease in poultry; investigate a suspected or confirmed case of a highly contagious disease in poultry; control disease spread; eliminate disease (such as H5N1); cleaning and decontamination; site security; animal tracing; and recovery procedures.

**Susan Brockus, DVM, MPH, works for IDPH as the state public health veterinarian. David Schmitt, DVM, is the assistant state veterinarian at IDALS.*



Lighten Up Iowa scholarships available through ICCCC

By Kim Lansing*

Physical activity can feel great, and healthy nutrition choices can be de-lish! But did you know that these are also two of the best ways to fight cancer? For this reason, the Iowa Consortium for Comprehensive Cancer Control (ICCCC) will again offer scholarships for participation in Lighten Up Iowa.

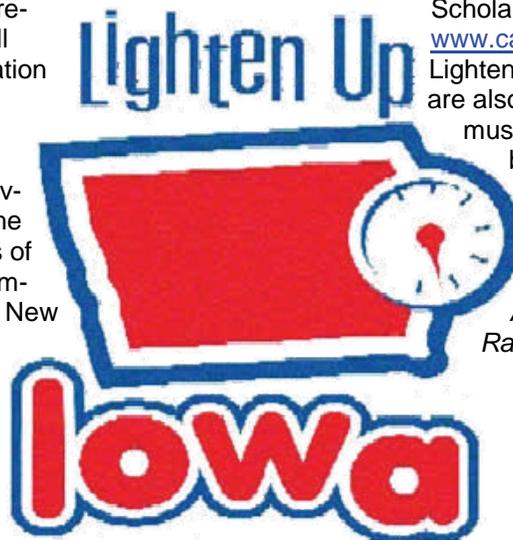
Lighten Up Iowa uses friendly team competition to promote physical activity and improve dietary habits. For the scholarship, participants form teams of 5 to 10 people from work, family, community or faith-based organizations. New for 2006 is the "Minutes of Activity Division," where teams track and report their minutes of activity each month.

The competition starts Jan. 18 and lasts five months. The cost of enrollment for each participant is \$10.00. The consortium has allocated \$2,000 for scholarships to individual team members based on financial need and interest in changes such as making healthier food choices,

becoming more active, improving physical stamina and/or losing weight.

Scholarship applications are available at www.canceriowa.org. Flyers promoting Lighten Up Iowa and the ICCCC Scholarship are also available for download. Applications must be sent to kim.lansing@cancer.org by Dec. 19.

** Kim Lansing is a co-chair of the ICCCC Obesity Workgroup and a Health Initiatives coordinator at the American Cancer Society in Cedar Rapids.*



Awards given to youth anti-tobacco campaign

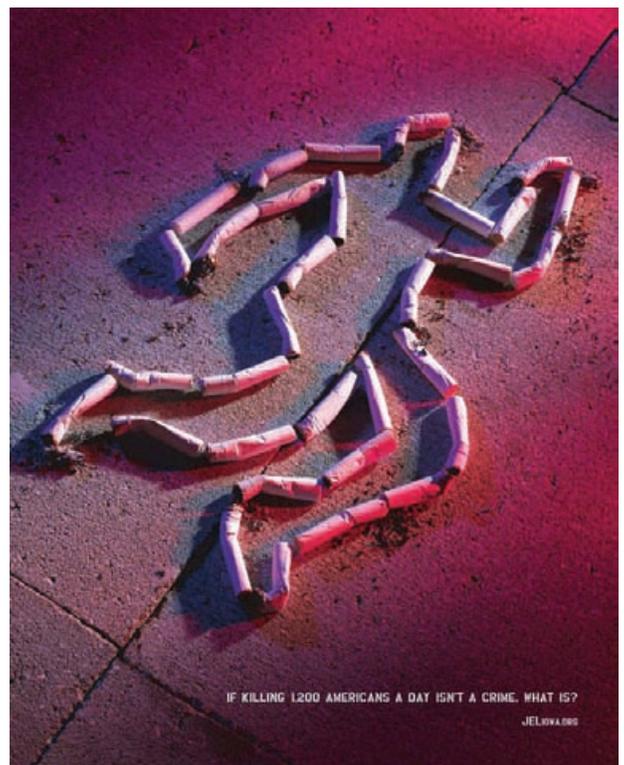
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well below the national average. The JEL campaign has been crucial to this success, helping to prevent the addiction of tens of thousands of Iowa's kids."

"We're honored that leaders in the public health field recognize our contributions to Iowa's tobacco counter-marketing effort," said Louie Laurent, president of ZLRIGNITION. "Even more gratifying is the fact that our work has helped to substantially reduce tobacco use by Iowa teens."

Also during the meeting, Kevin Teale, IDPH communications director, was elected to a two-year term on the NPHIC Executive Board. He had previously served on the board for six years from 1996 to 2003, including a year as president in 1999.

**Joyce Allard is the community education coordinator at IDPH.*



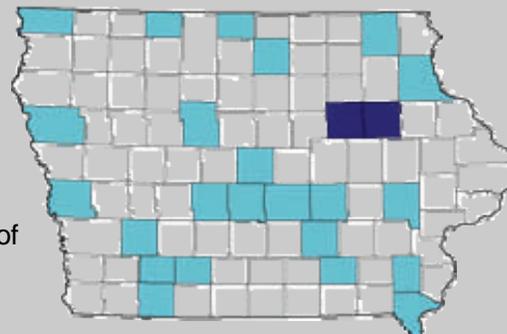
This award-winning JEL mall poster asks, "If killing 1,200 Americans a day isn't a crime, what is?"



Harkin Wellness Grant Features

By Don McCormick*

As part of Senator Tom Harkin's (D-IA) continuing effort to promote healthy lifestyles in Iowa, he announced in September of this year that \$2.7 million had been awarded to 28 public and private organizations through the Harkin Wellness Grant (HWG) program with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH). Recipients of the HWG include community organizations such as counties, townships or cities, educational agencies and school districts, public health organizations, health care providers and community-based nonprofit organizations.



This issue of *FOCUS* features stories about two grant recipients, the lead agencies of which are located in the northeastern Iowa counties of Black Hawk and Buchanan.

Wellness center to serve rural residents

True or false? To successfully obtain funding for a community health and wellness center you have to be a registered dietician, physical education teacher or civic leader.

"False," would be the answer of Aurora resident Karen Murley, a self-described "retired farmer and occasional gopher" in this town of 192 residents. You just need people who care, and to demonstrate need, she might add.

"This little town has always been known for how people can work together and accomplish big things," Murley said. "Most didn't know how to write a grant, though, and I knew someone who did."

For almost five years, the 8,000+ residents of northeast Buchanan, southeast Fayette, and southwest Clayton counties have longed for a conveniently located facility where they can engage in physical fitness and wellness

activities year-round. Thanks to a new Harkin Wellness Grant (HWG), they will soon have such a facility – the Aurora Comet Center.

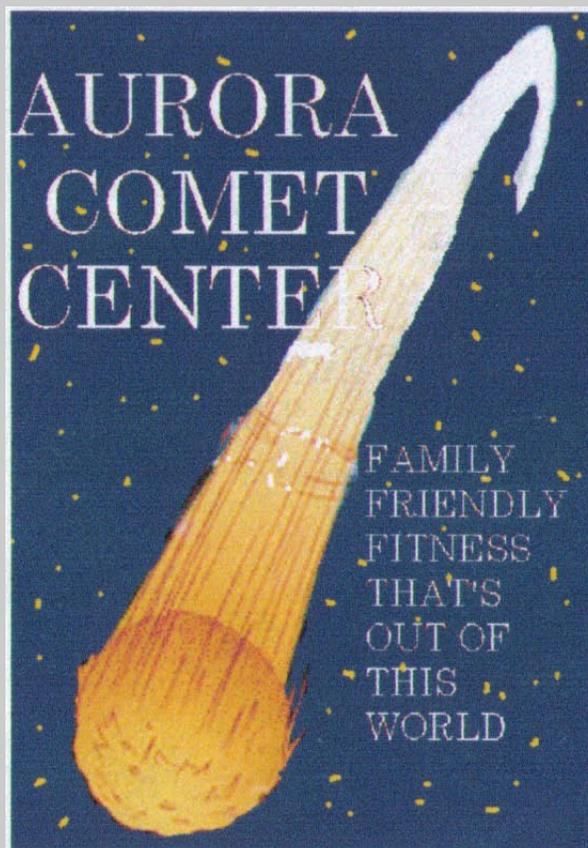
Named after the old Aurora school newspaper, the 8,600 square foot Comet Center will include an AAU regulation size sport court, walking track, exercise/weight room, kitchenette and showers. Karate, yoga and tai chi are some of the exercise programs currently being considered.

Even with generous start-up donations from the Dave Young and Vance Coffman families, Murely, whose official title is director of the HWG Application Committee, had to make residents feel confident about the long-term responsibilities associated with the project. "That's why we've created an endowment fund," Murley said. By the way, she chairs that committee, too.

With vision like this, it is not surprising that the project is scheduled to be completed almost debt free. Construction began in October, and will last until June 2006.

Also referred to as the Aurora Community Wellness and Fitness Center, the Comet Center was designed to meet the needs of a rural and aging population, where

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transportation, poverty and unemployment are real concerns. This creates the need for improved mental health, Murely said. "The surrounding boards of health recognize the presence of depression here. With this center, people will be able to come together and that should improve mental health while increasing physical fitness and fun."

It is important to note the entire project area has been recognized by the state as one in significant need of health services, and that all three counties lack transportation to outlying areas. With this in mind, planners decided to place a Honeywell HomMed Health Center kiosk in the facility.

Normally used in private homes, the kiosk operates like an ATM. After an ID card is swiped, a user-friendly voice and easy-to-read display guide the user through a vital signs collection process that takes about three minutes. Weight, blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen saturation are measured and logged into a secure file members can use to track personal progress or identify health risks. A local registered nurse will regularly review the files and provide data to health care professionals and family members registered by the user.

Besides providing health and wellness equipment and programming, the Comet Center will house the Aurora Public Library, currently located in the local fire station. Partnerships with day care providers and senior citizens groups are also being explored. The entire project is estimated to serve about 2,500 people.



The Honeywell HomMed Health Center collects health data such as weight, blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen saturation.

Data lights the way to better health for areas in need

"We are data driven in almost everything we do," says Bruce Meisinger, manager of Health Planning and Development at the Black Hawk County Health Department. If you don't believe him, take a quick look at the Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Improvement Planning (CHNA & HIP) initiative update the county completed last winter.

You will see some numbers. Lots of numbers.

When it came time for Black Hawk County to apply for a Harkin Wellness Grant this summer, it is not surprising the first thing they reached for was data. In fact, they still rely on this important resource as they continue to build partnerships, Meisinger says. "It's the chief exhibit we use to tell the community what we need to do, and with whom."

Take the data recently gathered on school-age children. The most recent health screenings conducted by school nurses in the Waterloo Community School District showed that roughly 37 percent of all

students screened were over the 85th percentile of body mass index (BMI) measurements. This corresponds to being overweight or obese. Within this data, 33.5 percent of Caucasian students screened were over the 85th percentile of BMI, while as many as 45 percent of African American students fell into this range.



With data like this illuminating areas that need the most attention, Black Hawk County Health has partnered with other organizations to deliver the Lighted School House for Fit Families project. Among them is the University of Northern Iowa's Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services Program. They have allowed their mascot, Hal (Healthy and Active Lifestyles), to be used to help with promotional activities. "We've added the word 'Pals' to this concept because we want young people to feel that they are friends of Hal,"

Meisinger said. HAL will be making appearances during the program.

Beginning in January, Walter Cunningham and Irving Elementary schools will stay open two nights a week to

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provide opportunities for families to enjoy recreational activities, and health, fitness and wellness services.

Meisinger says the beauty of the program is that it basically markets itself. First of all, the two participating schools are located in areas the data analysis identified as having high risk factors for poor health. Secondly, buildings that are usually dark in the evening will be lit up on a regular basis. "When people see this, they will know that it's a safe environment, and want to know what's going on."

Michelle Temeyer, director of Community Education at Waterloo Community Schools said that both of these schools were actually designed with community use in mind. "This program suits our mission to provide inviting facilities which meet the needs of the community," Temeyer said. "Facilities like these really are owned by everybody."

Principals have pledged their support, and teachers are encouraged to act as role models by attending the Lighted School House program. School assemblies have been scheduled to promote the program to students, in the hope that they will take information home to their families. "If you have a child who is overweight, chances are there are others at home who are as well," Meisinger says. "You're not going to effectively reach that kid unless you address it as a family issue."

Both the Lighted School House and the CHNA & HIP project are driven by data collected from the KALYPSO Web-based Community Health Screening System.

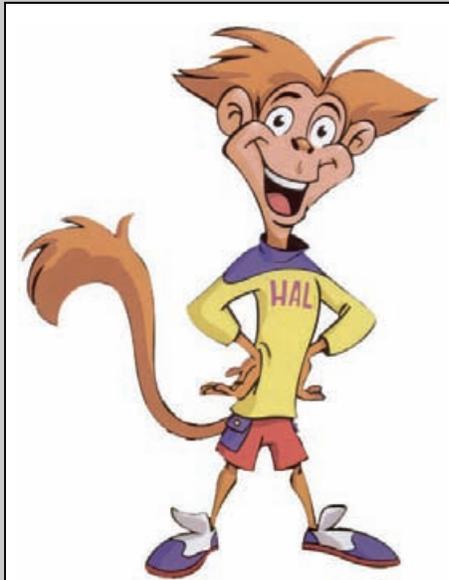
Originally designed for use in schools, the utility of KALYPSO is expected to broaden with Harkin Wellness Grant funding to meet the needs of other populations within this county of 120,000.

The new funding will also benefit employee wellness programs. Meisinger says the goal is to target the health needs of 2,000 workers from 10 employers, including those based at the Cedar Falls industrial park. UNI Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services staff will help with assessments and program development.

Another target group to be served by the Harkin Wellness Grant will be Black Hawk County seniors. The Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging will be a key partner in designing a program to increase the overall well being of seniors 60 and older. The program, called Aging Our Community Well, will focus on physical activity and health education on such topics as arthritis, nutrition and diabetes risk factors. (Diabetes hospitalization in Black Hawk County exceeds the statewide rate by 46 percent.)

Whether the target group is made up of young people, seniors or people in between, Meisinger stresses the importance of using data to guide programs that are far-reaching in their effectiveness. "It's logical to expect that the data you collect ... should directly drive the strategic health improvement planning process that determines your health priorities for the next five years."

**Don McCormick is the FOCUS editor.*



Hal, a mascot owned by the Youth Fitness and Obesity Institute at the University of Northern Iowa, is helping promote health and wellness in Black Hawk County.

Rural health activist honored

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cate for women and children; a dedicated, thoughtful advocate for health care and children's health; a local, state and national activist; and a health leader.

Jones is an active member on numerous local, state, and national boards and associations. A strong advocate for rural health services, she works to assure quality services within the community through direct provision, and works to assure services on state and national policy levels.

"I was honored to receive the award," Jones said. "But having known Jerry and the work he did for health care in Iowa doubles the honor." Letters of nomination were contributed by rural health activist, Mary Weaver; Dr. Mary Mincer Hansen, R.N., Ph.D., director of the Iowa Department of Public Health; State Representative Linda Upmeyer; and U.S. Senator Tom Harkin.

**Sandy Briggs is an information specialist in the IDPH Office of Community Education.*



Iowa Department of Public Health

Advancing Health Through the Generations

Help prevent trouble in Toyland

By Debbi Cooper*

For most adults, the winter holidays mean festive parties, scrumptious food, and spending time with family and friends. For children, the entire season has another meaning – toys, toys and more toys. Whether it's Black Belts Karate Home Studio or Dora's Talking Kitchen, nothing puts a smile on a child's face faster than a freshly unwrapped toy.



Toys are supposed to be fun. They are also an important part of any child's development. It is sobering to learn, however, that in 2003 approximately 199,044 children *and* adults in the United States were treated in hospital emergency rooms for toy-related injuries. Approximately 4,500 of them were admitted or died.

Do you know what toys are safe for your child?

- Be a label reader. Look for labels that give age recommendations, but keep things in perspective. Of course, your children are more advanced and mature than anyone else's! Just remember that the age-appropriate level for a toy is determined by safety factors – not intelligence or personal characteristics. Read the label.
- For infants, toddlers and preschoolers, choose toys that are sturdy and well-made. Watch for small parts that could become choking hazards. Do not be afraid to twist, pull, or drop toys to test their sturdiness. If you break a toy before leaving the store, apologize and go home with the knowledge that you made the right choice *not* to buy it. Suspected safety negligence can be reported to the author or the Consumer Product Safety Commission (www.cpsc.gov).
- For all children under age 8 years, avoid toys that have sharp edges and points.
- Buying a bike, roller blades or skateboard? Remember that the gift is not complete unless proper protective gear is included.
- Toy darts or arrows used by children should have soft tips or suction cups. Toy guns should be brightly colored to avoid being mistaken for the real thing. Teach your children to never point darts, arrows, or a gun at anyone.
- Electrical toys must meet certain safety standards for construction and wiring. Look for UL (Underwriters Laboratories) approval on the packaging.
- Shopping for toys online may be convenient. Be aware, however, that Internet toy retailers are not required to include information about choking hazards or age-appropriateness in their product descriptions. Furthermore, some online toy sellers may utilize foreign toy manufacturers whose products are not even required to meet strict U.S. regulations. Consider skipping online shopping altogether and do the walking. It is better for your health anyway.
- Last but not least, ensure your child's safety by supervising their play. Injuries to children can be prevented with the use of safe toys *and* proper supervision.

For additional information on choosing safe toys, visit www.cpsc.gov.

Have a wonderful and safe holiday season!

**Debbi Cooper is an environmental specialist in the IDPH Division of Environmental Health.*



Health in Iowa: a historical perspective

With the summer of 2005 marking the beginning of the 125th year of organized public health in Iowa, during the coming year *FOCUS* is proud to highlight major historical events in public health. This issue's installment comes to us from Dr. Ronald D. Eckoff, who retired in 2002 after 36 years at IDPH.

First chair of State Board of Health: 'Forewarned is forearmed'

The year was 1880. Iowa had been a state for 34 years. Thomas Edison was working on improvements to the incandescent light bulb, while Alexander Graham Bell had only recently invented the telephone. In the world of medicine, 1880 was the year Pasteur identified the streptococcus, staphylococcus and pneumococcus, Eberth the typhoid bacillus, and Laveran the malaria parasite. One year prior, Neisser had identified the gonococcus, and Neisser & Hansen the lepra bacillus.

Enter Dr. W.S. Robertson of Muscatine, Iowa, the first chair of "Theory and Practice of Medicine and Clinical Medicine" at the State University of Iowa (now the University of Iowa). In 1879, Robertson chaired a committee of the Iowa Medical Society that recommended the enactment of a "law creating a State Board of Health, and the Registration of Vital Statistics." Governor John Henry Gear signed the bill into law on March 26, 1880.

The first State Board of Health meeting was held on May 5 in Des Moines. Initial board members consisted of eight physicians and the attorney general. They hailed from Centerville, Clarinda, Dallas Center, Des Moines, Lake Mills, McGregor, Muscatine, Waterloo and Washington.

State Board of Health Responsibilities (1880)

General supervision of health
Matters related to quarantine
Supervise registration of births, deaths and marriages
Make rules and do investigations

Annual appropriation: \$5,000

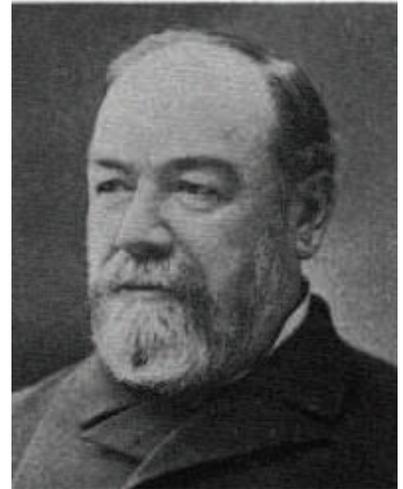
Following are the opening paragraphs of Dr. Robertson's introductory address on taking the chair at the first meeting:

Gentlemen -- We have come together at the call of the Governor for the purpose of organizing a 'State Board of Health' as provided for in Chapter 151, of the acts of the Eighteenth General Assembly of the State of Iowa.

It is a subject of gratulation that the last legislature has placed our State abreast of so many of her sister States on the great work of sanitary

progress, by creating a State Board of Health, which may inaugurate such measures as will materially limit the spread, and reduce the mortality of many of the diseases of the country; and, if necessary, enforce such sanitary regulations as will largely stamp out those influences which become prolific causes of disease.

Nor, can I conceive of any office which as physicians could afford us more pleasure, and result in more good to the masses of the people than will be derived from the operation of this Board.



Dr. W.S. Robertson
President, State Board of Health
1880 - 1887

It is an old proverb that 'forewarned is forearmed.' It shall then become our duty to do much toward educating the people in the principles of hygiene and sanitary reform; to show them something of the nature and many of the causes of disease, and to impress them with the knowledge of the fact that in their manner of life, and in their every day surroundings, lie many of the means of inducing or preventing the encroachment of disease.

After briefly discussing organizational matters and priorities, Dr. Robertson stressed the importance of this first State Board of Health:

In conclusion, gentlemen, let me express the hope that the operation of this Board in the sanitary measures it may inaugurate and carry out, may so demonstrate the wisdom of its creation that it may prove a blessing to the whole State, and that, with advancing years it may develop a strength and influence for good which shall make Iowa one of the most salubrious, as it is one of the most prosperous, States of our confederation.



State Library, online resources provide valuable information

By Annette Wetteland*

Need help finding reliable consumer health information for a client? Has there been a recent outbreak of a contagious disease or a sudden disaster for which you need up-to-date information? Is there a public health issue relating to the prevention of injury or disease that you need to know more about?

The Medical Library staff at the State Library of Iowa can refer you to the best information sources on the Web, in print and in state government. They can supply answers to medical research questions, and send articles, books, and other publications to requestors at no charge.

As with any library, the first step is to get a card. (Visit www.silo.lib.ia.us, or call 1-800-248-4483.) The card gives users access to specialized databases of magazines and newspaper articles, and allows books to be checked out for up to three weeks. The State Library also has a number of online indexes and full text articles that can be accessed free of charge.



One such online resource available through the State Library Web site is the EBSCOhost database. EBSCOhost includes thousands of full-text articles on nursing and medicine, and gives users access to the Cochrane Collection databases, a resource for evidence-based medicine that includes full text articles, abstracts and controlled trials.

There are also a number of sites on the World Wide Web that contain reputable medical and consumer health information. *HealthInfoIowa* (www.healthinfoiowa.org) offers links to current, authoritative sources of medical information for Iowa health care practitioners and consumers. MedlinePlus (www.medlineplus.gov) is a full-text Web site featuring information on health topics and prescription drugs for consumers.

Another good online resource is PubMed (www.pubmed.gov). This site provides access to more than 15 million MEDLINE citations dating back to the mid-1950s. MEDLINE is a comprehensive literature index with abstracts of life sciences and biomedical information. It covers the fields of medicine, nursing, dentistry, veterinary medicine and health care systems. PubMed includes links to many sites providing full text articles and other related resources.

The State Library is located in the Ola Babcock Building, northeast of the Capitol as seen here.

**Annette Wetteland is the communications coordinator at the State Library of Iowa.*

U.S. Senator Tom Harkin (second from right) is presented with the Injury Prevention Champion Award by representatives from the State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors Association (STIPDA). The group presented Senator Harkin with the award at the U.S. Capitol on Oct. 26 for his work on behalf of injury prevention programs. Representatives pictured from left to right are: IDPH Violence Prevention Coordinator Binnie LeHew; STIPDA staff member Amy Woodward; John Lundell of the University of Iowa Injury Prevention Research Center; and STIPDA President-elect Susan Hardman.



A Chef Charles Favorite

OLD-FASHIONED Vegetable Soup

1 pkg. (10 oz.) frozen mixed soup vegetables (carrots, potatoes, peas, green bean, corn, etc.)
1/2 cup frozen chopped onions
1/4 cup frozen chopped green peppers
1 can beans of your choice, drained
1 can (46 oz.) low sodium tomato juice
1/2 cup water
1 cup mushrooms (fresh), sliced
1 bay leaf
1 teaspoon dried whole basil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper

Combine all ingredients in a large, heavy sauce pan. Bring to a boil. Cover; reduce heat and simmer for 30 to 45 minutes. Remove bay leaf before serving. Makes 8 servings.

Include **GREEN** in your low-fat diet to maintain:

- A lower risk of some cancers
- Vision health
- Strong bones and teeth



Wellmark Foundation grant teleconference announced

Diabetes, depression, end-of-life care, and health literacy are the focus areas of the 2006 Wellmark Foundation health improvement agenda. Potential grant seekers in Iowa may learn about the grant review criteria and the application process through a teleconference scheduled for broadcast over the Iowa Communications Network (ICN) on Jan. 9 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Registration is not required for attendance.

For a list of ICN locations, application deadlines, resources for grant writers, and more information about the program, go to www.wellmark.com and click on "The Wellmark Foundation."



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Iowa Department of Public Health

Advancing Health Through the Generations

...and then some

IDPH employee re-elected to national council

Joe Ferrell, education coordinator in the IDPH Bureau of EMS, was recently re-elected as treasurer for the National Council of State EMS Training Coordinators. The Council works toward the standardization of nationwide training curricula; certification/recertification policies and procedures; the reciprocity of certification from state to state; and the public recognition and trust of prehospital EMS personnel health care providers.

The election took place at the council's 2005 annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas. This will be Ferrell's second term in office.

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