

# PIKE COUNTY CONNECTIONS

Collaborate • Communicate • Connect

The Pike County Community Health Partnership Newsletter



March 2011

## Events in March

Save Your Vision Month

National Nutrition Month

National Sleep Awareness Week—7-13

National Poison Prevention Week—20-26

Salt Awareness Week— 21-27

World Tuberculosis Day—24

### Diabetes Alert Day—March 22nd

Pike County Health Department is offering a FREE, random blood sugar screening for diabetes on Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, for “National Diabetes Alert Day”.

Diabetes Alert Day is a one-day “wake up call” to let the public know about the seriousness of type 2 diabetes -- especially when left undiagnosed and untreated.

Diabetes is a silent disease. You may have it for years and never know it. It is recommended that everyone age 45 and older be tested for diabetes every 3 years. However, people at high risk for diabetes should be tested more often and at a younger age.

Risk factors for diabetes include: a family history of diabetes, diabetes during pregnancy or delivering a baby weighing more than 9 lbs at birth, being overweight, lack of physical activity, age 65 years or older, and high blood pressure.

The free blood sugar screening will be held at Pike County Health Department, 113 E. Jefferson St. in Pittsfield, from 9:00 am to noon on Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>. No appointment is necessary. For more information contact Judy Sweeting, RN, Pike County Health Department Diabetes Program Coordinator at 285-4407, extension 133.

### Drive Thru Colorectal Cancer Screening

Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>  
11 a.m.—4p.m.  
at Illini’s main entrance

Pick up your free screening kit—  
no appointment necessary

### Pike County Chamber of Commerce’s Annual Dinner

6 PM Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>

Collver Family Winery in Barry

The dinner will include presentations of the Volunteer of the Year, Business of the Year and the Community Betterment Awards.

Nominations are being sought for these awards and nomination forms can be downloaded from the Chamber section on the web site at [www.pikeil.org](http://www.pikeil.org).

For tickets, call 285-2971 or email the Chamber office at [info@pikeil.org](mailto:info@pikeil.org)



### “Hands-on-Health Fair”

Illini Community Hospital has teamed up with Pittsfield High School to offer a “Hands-on-Health Fair” March 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. Members of the high school’s student wellness committee and Illini’s community pillar team worked together to establish eight different areas of interest. The hands-on-health fair will reach students in all Physical Education classes and provide an interactive workshop setting. During the two-day event, students will learn about:

- 1) Tobacco prevention with a focus on smokeless tobacco
- 2) Importance of Physical Activity
- 3) Importance of Good Hygiene
- 4) Stress Management and Life Skills
- 5) Skin Health
- 6) Good Nutrition
- 7) Childhood Obesity
- 8) Dangers of Alcohol Abuse (DARE)



## Teuscher Workforce Retraining Scholarships offered by Health and Wellness Foundation of Pike County

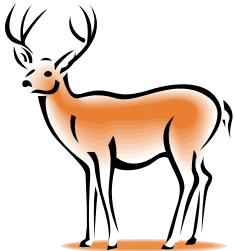
The deadline for submitting this scholarship is May 1, 2011

The Health and Wellness Foundation of Pike County (HWFPC), formerly known as Illini Community Health Care Foundation, is currently accepting applications for its 2011 John S. Teuscher Workforce Retraining Scholarship.

The Scholarship, established in October of 2005, was created to enable Pike County individuals already in the workforce to go back to school to pursue education in a health field or to seek supplementary certifications or training in a particular health occupation. Up to 2 (two) \$1000 scholarships are awarded in this program annually and may be applied for up to 3 successive years. Applications may be obtained from the Health and Wellness Foundation of Pike County office at 112 W. Washington, Pittsfield, IL or by calling 217-285-6080. The deadline for submitting this scholarship application to the Foundation office is May 1, 2011.

“We continue to see a shortage nationally of qualified health practitioners,” said Patty McIntosh, HWFPC Executive Director. “In the Department of Health and Human Services’ February 15, 2011 report on Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA), it was estimated that in Illinois alone 2,224,565 individuals were underserved by primary care providers. Rural areas are affected more greatly by this shortage than metropolitan areas. It is our hope that this Scholarship can enable those already in the workplace to more easily transition into a health occupation. They benefit as does the community.”

## Access Illinois Outdoor’s Access Food Program Yields Another Trophy Year for Local Food Pantries



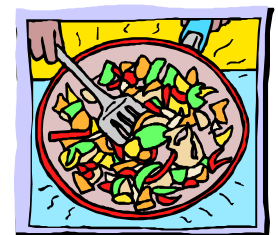
The Access Food program conducted in Pike County by Access Illinois Outdoors was a huge success this year contributing 15,430 pounds of processed venison to local food pantries for distribution to needy families. This program would not have been a success without collaboration on several levels.

Success of the program critically depends on hunters, both resident and non-resident, who are willing to donate deer, volunteers to check in the deer, food pantry workers who help distribute the meat, foundations who provide grants to supplement the program and individuals and service organizations who help pick up the tab for the processing costs.

We are extremely fortunate in Pike County to have the help of the Health & Wellness Foundation, Rotary and Lion’s organizations, Whitetails Unlimited and individuals who have helped with the actual processing costs. The Archery Shop employees volunteer their time to check in deer during store hours and the Access Illinois Outdoors coordinator checks in the deer after hours and weekends. Volunteers and staff at the Two Rivers Regional Council of Public Officials food pantry and Barry Food pantry help distribute the meat.

Even though, by economists’ definitions, the recession is over, local families are still feeling its effects. Many of these families have never accessed food assistance before. The recession has depleted the savings of the lowest income families, leaving them even more vulnerable to food poverty. They have to make sacrifices such as reducing their food intake and the quality of their food to get by financially. In most cases, this means eliminating meat from their grocery bill. The situation for low-income households with children is even more dire, a particularly troubling trend as economic instability and hunger have severe, long-term consequences for children. Throughout 2010, more than three out of four (76 percent) households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 experienced difficulty affording food. Current estimates are 10% of Illinois households are not sure if they will have enough food to eat.

Brenda Middendorf, Access Illinois Coordinator, says “We want to express our sincere and deep appreciation to everyone who helped make this program such a huge success this year. It would not be possible without all the partners working together to make this happen.”



# Pike County Public Transportation Service

The Pike County Public Transportation Service operated through West Central Mass Transit District got off to a roaring start with 1,427 one way trips in January, with 397 outside of Pittsfield, covering 8,929 miles. These numbers are higher than what other counties have shown after being up and running for a couple of years.

The partnership was launched in January 2009 and worked through the Illinois Rural Transit Assistance Center to complete the Transportation Coordination Primer which is a step by step process to develop a tailored public transportation system. It was the decision of the Pike Transit Group to contract with West Central Mass Transit District based in Jacksonville, IL, to provide the services identified from the studies. Implementing the service fulfilled a multi-year dream of bringing public transportation to the county. Federal and state money, donations and fares cover operating costs.

The service has 6 vehicles – two 14 passenger vans, two 6-passenger vans, a 22 passenger unit and a 10 passenger unit, all sporting new Pike County Transportation Logos. Three full time and four part time employees operate the service. It is likely more part time drivers will be hired to handle rides to medical appointments in Springfield and Hannibal Mo. The Pittsfield Office is located at the former JDL Building #4 at 39637 260<sup>th</sup> Ave in Pittsfield and provides office and garage space. Rides may be arranged by calling 285-4529. The phones are staffed 6:30 am through 6:00 pm Monday through Friday with an answering machine for after hours calls.

Pike County  
Public Transportation  
285-4529



## March is Save Your Vision Month 6 Things You Can Do for Your Sight

1. **Get regular eye exams.** Be sure to tell the provider about your medical history and the activities you do at work and for pleasure.
2. **Set up your computer work station properly.** For more information about this visit [www.aoa.org/x5072.xml?prt](http://www.aoa.org/x5072.xml?prt).
3. **Rest your eyes.** Periodically throughout the day stop, stretch, and focus on objects that are at least 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.
4. **Wear sunglasses.** Put on sunglasses anytime your eyes are exposed to UV rays. Exposure to UV rays happens on cloudy or winter days as well as on sunny days.
5. **Take a multivitamin.** Based on results of the Age-Related Eye Disease Study (AREDS) conducted by the National Eye Institute, many eye care practitioners believe that a multivitamin designed for eye health will slow down the progression of macular degeneration.
6. **Avoid smoking.** Smoking has been identified as a risk factor in developing Age-Related Macular Degeneration, cataracts, and optic nerve damage. If you need help to quit smoking, visit your health care provider or call the Illinois Tobacco Quit Line at 1-866-784-8937.

# Report from Pike County Operation Snowball

## February

The Operation Snowball hosted an event called Snowflake on February 22, 2011 at the Pittsfield Assembly of God gymnasium. 82 Pike County 7th graders were in attendance. The theme for this year was "Say 'Peace Out' to Drugs". The day began at 8:15 with the students enjoying donuts and fruit. Pizza was served for lunch. The event ended at 2:30. The keynote speaker was Jim Jacques who spoke about the pressures that today's teens have to face and what it can do to them if they give in to that pressure. The students really listened to what Jim had to say. How to say "no" was a big point throughout the day. Our hope is that these students will take the information that they have learned from this event back to their peers and teach them some of the things that were talked about.

The workshops were Consequences, Peer Pressure, Prevention Games, and Body Image/Self Esteem. Trooper Mike Kindhart and Teresa Manker from Quanada were there to help out in the discussions in the workshops. The students were taught lessons by participating in activities in each of the workshops except the Consequences workshop. In the Consequences workshop, they watched a video that the Snowball students made about the consequences that could happen to them if they decided to give in to peer pressure by drinking alcohol.

## March

The Snowball members will participate in the Grim Reaper at each of the high schools.

## April

April is Alcohol Awareness Month. Operation Snowball will again be participating in Sticker Shock.

Operation Snowball is an alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use prevention program focusing on leadership development to empower youth to lead drug free lives. The Pike County group has 16 high school students who are dedicated to being the role models for our community. Members include: Allyson Bingham, Jacqueline Bingham, Megan Bonnett, Alyssa Cothren, Brandi Cothren, Allison Fox, Haelee Harris, Cara Hill, Morgan Huddleston, Mackenzie James, Cassandra Lightle, Jonah McConnell, Caylee Miller, Megan Sanderson, Emily Smith, and Kayla Schacht.



## 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Pike County Chamber Golf Tournament

Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup>

Old Orchard Country Club in Pittsfield

8:15am registration

9:00am Shotgun Start

For more information call the Chamber of Commerce office at 285-2971

### Steering Committee Members:

**Katie Wilson & Karen Epley**

Mental Health Centers of Western Illinois, Pike County location

**Vacant**

University of Illinois Extension, Pike County Unit

**Connie Schroeder & Jennifer Mowen**

Illini Community Hospital

**Anita Andress & Jan Bleich**

Pike County Health Department

**Patricia McIntosh**

Health and Wellness Foundation of Pike County

### At-Large Steering Committee Members:

**Brenda Middendorf**

Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Area

**Susan Bowen**

PACT Headstart