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March is National Nutrition Month and the theme this year is "Get Your Plate in Shape."

The campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

For tips and ideas, check out [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

## Montgomery County honored at Governor's Conference on Tourism

Tuesday, March 6, was a great night for Montgomery County. They were awarded two of eight awards presented at the Governor's Conference on Tourism Banquet held in West Memphis, Arkansas.

The Lake Ouachita Vista Trail (LOViT) TrailDogs were honored as the winner of the 2012 Outstanding Volunteer Service Award. This award is given each year to an individual or organization that through volunteer spirit has made a substantial contribution to the Arkansas Tourism industry.

This small group of

dedicated trail blazers has worked for seven years to complete over 33 miles of new trails along the southern shore of Lake Ouachita. Jerry Shields, TrailDog cap-

tain, accepted the award on behalf of the group, 8 of whom were in attendance, and thanked each of them who, over the years, has provided support to the now award winning project.



**Jerry Shields, lead TrailDog and Coalition Chair for Montgomery County Health Education Advisory Board, accepting the award for the Governor's 2012 Volunteer Service of the Year award.**

The Back Porch Music program also won the Governor's Bootstrap award. It was presented to an individual or organization that has achieved significant success "on a shoestring", having limited resources or finances.

Shields commented that "this is an unprecedented achievement for our tiny community but not a surprising one as our county has a great spirit of volunteerism and is becoming a Mecca for tourism."

## Nashville 4G GHC Initiative increases visibility

Nashville's 4G Growing Healthy Communities Initiative is a partnership of local entities working together to encourage physical activity and improve access to healthy nutrition. The 4G's stand for "Get Informed", "Get Active", "Get Involved", and "Get Healthy".

Their website, [www.gethealthy4g.com](http://www.gethealthy4g.com),

has tabs for news, healthy tips, and an online resource directory and calendar that promote Nashville's Growing Healthy Communities participants and the services they offer.

In addition, to local events, one can find information about community garden and farmer's market activities,

cooking classes, health screenings, gardening and beekeeping workshops and other activities related to healthy nutrition and physical fitness.

The Howard County Farmer's Market also has a facebook page and the calendar and Farmer's Market have links on the Nashville Chamber of Commerce website.

# The unexpected benefits of regular exercise

The following article was written by Don Adams, ADH SW Regional Director, for the quarterly *Partnerships for the Pathway* newsletter.

Want to feel better, have more energy, and perhaps even live longer? Look no further than exercise. Most of us know the common benefits of routine exercise- weight management, prevention/control of many chronic diseases. But, did you know the benefits extend far beyond chronic disease prevention and weight management to such areas as mental health and your love life? Now that I have your attention, let's look at a few of the not so commonly known benefits.

**Improves Mood:** Need an emotional lift after a stressful day? Exercise stimulates various brain chemicals that may leave you feeling happier and more relaxed. You may also feel better about your appearance and yourself when you

exercise regularly, which can boost your confidence and improve self-esteem. Researchers have found that regular exercise is likely to reduce depression and anxiety, plus help you to better manage stress.

**Boosts Energy:** Regular physical activity can improve your muscle strength and boost your endurance. Exercise delivers oxygen and nutrients to your tissues and helps your cardio vascular system work more efficiently. When your heart and lungs work more efficiently, you have more energy to go about your daily life.

**Improves Love Life:** Regular exercise can leave you feeling better about how you look and boost your energy level, which may put that spark back into your marriage or relationship. But there is more to it than that; exercise can improve your libido, and men who exercise regularly have fewer problems with erectile dysfunction than

men who don't exercise.

**Promotes Better Sleep:** Struggling to fall asleep or to stay asleep? Regular exercise can help you fall asleep faster and deepen your sleep. Just don't exercise too close to bedtime, or you may be too energized to fall asleep.

Regular exercise is a great way to feel better, improve health and even gain some unexpected benefits. Thomas Jefferson profoundly said, "Without health there is no happiness. An attention to health, then, should take the place of every other object." Regular exercise is an individual choice, but through the efforts of Partnership for the Pathway, that choice is easier for the community of Tarkenton.



## 2012 HHI Sustainability Conference

The HHI Sustainability Conference in North Little Rock on February 28 and 29 was filled to capacity with 275 in attendance. A pre-conference from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on the 28<sup>th</sup> was also well attended and provided information about SMART objectives and social media.

The opening session featured a panel discussion focused on building healthy communities in the face of a changing landscape. Panelists included Dr. Paul Halverson, State Health Director, Dr. Creshelle Nash of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Jodiann Tritt of the Arkansas Hospital Associa-

tion, Itonia Trotter of the Minority Health Commission, Craig Wilson of the Center for Health Improvement and North Little Rock Mayor Patrick Henry Hays.



Debra Bolding talked about Nashville's 4G Growing Healthy Communities Initiative.

Dr. Maya Rockeymoore, PhD, Director of Leadership for Healthy Communities and president and CEO of Global Policy Solutions, presented the keynote address on "Building Health Across Communities".

After an exercise break, concurrent sessions on Healthy People 2020 topics rounded out the agenda for

day one.

Day two started out with a welcome from Randy Lee, Director, Center for Local Public Health, ADH, and was followed by a panel of local presenters who shared information about projects they are involved in and their experiences with MAP-IT: Mobilize, Assess, Plan, Implement, and Track.

After another physical activity break, a demonstration of the Cancer and Mortality Query Systems was given, along with an overview of updated county health profiles and other useful data sources.

The afternoon consisted of concurrent sessions highlighting successes from the field and featured communities, schools, coalitions, and communities putting prevention to work.

## Nevada County woman remembered

The Nevada County Cancer Association held the Annual Jami Powell Conference on February 25, 2012 at the Prescott Church of Christ from 9:30-2:00. The banquet is named for a well-loved local woman, who was a cancer survivor but unfortunately fell victim to a fatal heart attack at an early age,

Three speakers presented to the group of 45 attendees. Theressia Mitchell and Abby Holt with the Cancer Registry at the Arkansas Dept of Health spoke about cancer statistics in Nevada County. Billy Parish with the Arkansas Cancer Coalition talked about his organization and what they do.

Janet McAdams, RN, talked to the group about Act 811 and Act 13, the new tobacco protection laws for children, and the efforts the coalition has made to get the word

out about them. She also explained the harmful effects of both second-hand and third-hand smoke.

There were eight tables decorated in honor or memory of a loved one affected by cancer. Bags with pamphlets, a pocket calendar, and a breast cancer awareness bracelet were given to all attendees.

The conference was funded by a grant from the Susan G Komen Foundation. Fruit, muffins, and donuts were served for breakfast. The Church of Christ women served several different types of salads for lunch.

UAMS nursing students Samantha Stovall and Chelsi Chandler helped with the registration table. Jessie Henderson, Cathy Moseley, and Pat Hicks took pictures for the event. Dalaine Overton with DHS also

helped with the conference, as did several Nevada County Health Department employees.



Two of the 8 tables set up to honor those who have been affected by cancer.



## Dallas County gets advice on starting a farmers market

A group of DASH Coalition representatives, Liz McNair, Keith Gresham, Lamar Evans, and Joni McGaha, traveled from Fordyce to Nashville, Arkansas recently to tour the Howard County Farmers Market and demonstration garden and get tips from members of the



The Howard County Farmers Market wows the Dallas County visitors.

Howard County Farmers Market Overseers Committee on starting a farmers market in Dallas County.

Donna Webb, Rita Rector, Glenda Rice, Debra Bolding, Monica Stallworth, and Linda Johnson were on-hand to offer guidance and resources to help make it a successful venture.

Dallas County steering committee members have met twice since the visit and have established bylaws. Results of a community-wide survey to assess local interest in having a market have been compiled and incorporated into a PowerPoint presentation along with pictures of potential sites. Two meetings have also been scheduled with growers to present the information.

The biggest decision that has come up so far has been settling on where the market should be located. It has been narrowed down to two loca-

tions and a trial market is planned for Saturdays starting May 19. Locations will alternate between the two sites to help determine which will be most profitable for everyone involved.



DASH representatives get tips from Master Gardeners on the demonstration garden.



Joni McGaha, HHI Coord., Union Co., Editor  
Sarah Powell, RHS, Hempstead Co.  
Janet McAdams, HHI Manager, Nevada Co.  
Arnell Washington, RHS, Miller Co.  
Bonnie Carr- RHS, Montgomery Co.

## SOUTHWEST REGION HOMETOWN HEALTH

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[www.healthyarkansas.com](http://www.healthyarkansas.com)

## El Dorado to apply for grant to establish a school-based health center

A community meeting was held in El Dorado Tuesday evening, March 6, to get input from medical professionals and school officials concerning the intent of the El Dorado School District to apply for a grant to establish a school-based health center (SBHC). The local school board approved the idea at their last meeting.

A group of about 40 people listened as Bob Watson, Superintendent, explained that the district has an opportunity to receive \$540,000 in grant funds over the next five years to create a SBHC and focus on needs of the “whole child”.

The grant would be used to help renovate the former El Dorado High School for use as the center and pay a coordinator for the program, as well as cover utilities and other costs.

In the first year of the program, plans are to serve students at an elementary school where 92 percent of the 250 students are listed in the low socioeconomic group. Thereafter, the program will be offered to other district students and school staff members.

Deadline to apply for the grant is March 30 and if the district is approved, funds in the amount of \$150,000 will be received the first year of the five-year grant – an amount that will scale down each year, with \$75,000 the last year.

## Around the Region...

**Hot Spring County** - Suellen Simpson, RN, Hot Spring County Health Unit administrator, was a speaker at the Governor's Dislocated Workers Taskforce Meeting on March 1. She spoke to 81 laid off employees of Kohler Industries in both the morning and afternoon sessions. They were informed about programs offered at the health unit, including Family Planning, Immunizations, WIC, BreastCare, the tobacco cessation Quitline, Emergency Preparedness, and the importance of physical activity and good nutrition.

**Ouachita County** - Rebecca Wright, Ouachita County Health Unit administrator, gave a presentation to 47 at the Ouachita County HIPPIY office on February 27 and 78 at the Camden Church of God in Christ on February 29. The program both days focused on good health and disease prevention through exercise and nutrition.

Pamphlets were distributed on Act 811, how to read nutrition labels, nutrition facts, building a healthy meal, MyPlate, Heart Health, Stroke, Diabe-

tes, Safe Sleep for Baby, Tell Me About WIC, Good Food and a Whole Lot More (WIC), Preparing Makes Sense from FEMA, and Ouachita County Health Unit Services.

**Polk County** - Ouachita Craft Cottage in Mena recently donated hand crafted baby blankets, quilts, booties, bibs and wraps to the Polk County Health Unit. The ladies at the Cottage said they wanted to do something for the health unit in appreciation for all the Polk County Health unit does for the community. Health unit staff members will give the items to clients who are parents of newborns to help keep them warm.

**Union County** - Sgt. Michael Lynch and Sgt. Tugg Ledbetter of the Army National Guard were the speakers at the March meeting of the TOUCH Coalition. They explained that instead of speaking at school assemblies like they have done in the past, they are now being encouraged to work with coalitions to help reduce drug and alcohol use among students.

The Guard has resources, equipment and programs that can be used to help address substance use and abuse.

They only use evidence-based programs and a list of those can be found at <http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/>. One of those resources involves the use of electronic clickers to record and analyze survey responses. This allows for immediate results.

Of course, they have access to a helicopter, military vehicles, and inflatables for play but they cautioned against allowing that to become the focus instead of the anti-drug message.

Sgt. Ledbetter said “We are changing gears to building community. We can do almost anything within the coalitions. We can use the armories, gather evidenced-based information, analyze the data, bring in the helicopter or use military equipment – as long as it coordinates with the coalition’s goal to reduce drugs and alcohol”.