



Beverly Cook shares her struggle as a person living with HIV.

Photo by Layla Farmer

## Health department seeks churches' help to curb AIDS

BY LAYLA FARMER  
THE CHRONICLE

Church leaders and community members came together Monday to discuss the HIV/AIDS epidemic during a luncheon at the Piedmont Club sponsored by the Forsyth County Department of Public Health.

Patrice Toney, the newly-appointed HIV/STD supervisor for the department, led the discussion. Part of her responsibilities is to push the department's anti-STD initiative, "Prevent Ongoing Spread of STDs Everywhere," or POSSE.

"We can plan all day, but if we don't have the input and support of the community, then we're not going to be very effective," Toney told the overflow audience. "While these meetings are great, action is really the ultimate response."

Nearly 20 ministers and pastors were in attendance to discuss the theme of the event, "The Role of the Church and Community in Addressing HIV/AIDS."

"That really says something about our community," Toney remarked when the clergy were recognized. "We really love the whole community but the pastors are something special."

Regional DIS (Disease Intervention Specialist) Supervisor Lavida Joseph-Brown schooled the audience on statistics on the spread of HIV/AIDS and other STDs in the community.

"At this point, we cannot continue to be blinded by our beliefs - it's way beyond that," she told the group. "There is most definitely a need for us to come together as one and discuss what's happening in our community."

The Rev. Herb Miller, of First Baptist Church in Lexington, said HIV would have never been an epidemic if more people followed the word of God.

"If everyone followed the teachings that the church gives, the spread of the AIDS would be slow or not at all," he asserted, but he quickly added that that was not a realistic goal.

"The truth that the religious community has to deal with is that most unmarried adults within our ... community are not adhering to the laws," he said.



Patrice Toney

Despite the moral misgivings some may have about the manner in which some contract HIV/AIDS, religious leaders must reach out to those who suffer from the disease, Miller says.

"Our theological underpinnings are keeping us from helping those who need our help, our care, our love, our compassion," he declared. "The faith community has a responsibility to treat infected persons with compassion without stigmatizing them. The religious community must begin to address the issue."

Union Baptist Church Deacon Sammy Gray knows firsthand the horrors fraught by the disease. He has lost one son to AIDS and has another who is living with it.

"To see your own son die of AIDS will change the whole situation," said Gray, who was instrumental in the formation of Union's AIDS ministry.

He urged those present to volunteer in AIDS ministries and to reach out to those who are infected.

"All they want is love and understanding," he said. "You can't catch it by hugging or holding onto a person, talking to them no kind of way (and) it's a rewarding thing."

Beverly Cook, also a member of Union Baptist, was diagnosed with HIV in 1996.

"I wanted to die at some point because I was so ashamed," revealed Cook, a devout Christian and a Sunday School teacher.

"God has given me a new body, a new spirit, a new heart over time," she remarked.



Deacon Gray

"I'm going to live and not die and declare the work of the Lord."

For more information on POSSE, call Toney at 336-703-3269 or email her at [toneypy@forsyth.cc](mailto:toneypy@forsyth.cc)

## News Clips

### Congregational nursing and health ministries workshops offered

The Congregational Nursing and Health Ministries Council of Forsyth County is offering a free training opportunity on beginning a health ministry or parish (congregational) nursing program in a faith community setting. The workshop is for clergy, lay leaders and health professionals from a congregation.

The workshop will provide a "getting started" outline, information on successful models already in place, how to start a health ministry program, and information on what a congregational nurse and/or health ministry program can offer the congregation and the community.

Those interested can attend the free workshop on either Thursday, May 29, from 7 - 8:30 p.m. or on Friday, May 30, from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. (lunch included). The sessions will be held at Salemtowne Moravian Retirement Community. Registration is required. Please respond to Joan Vanhoy at 767-8130 or at [jvanhoy@salemtowne.org](mailto:jvanhoy@salemtowne.org).

### Youth bike rodeo on May 17

The Winston-Salem Police Department will hold a Bike Rodeo on May 17 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the parking lot of the Gateway YWCA on South Main Street.

A bike course will be set up for children to ride and learn the basics of bike safety. Children are encouraged to bring their own bicycles and helmets to participate in the bike course. The Winston-Salem Police Department Bike Patrol and Crime Prevention Units will provide bicycle safety training.

Experts will also provide bicycle helmet sizing and a demonstration of outdoor bicycle safety activities. A drawing for a free bicycle will be held.

"Many children are injured each year unnecessarily," said Donna Joyner, RN, and Safe Kids Coordinator at Brenner Children's Hospital. "By promoting bike safety, children can learn to enjoy a healthy activity safely."

Other community agencies planning to attend include: MADD, Work Family Resource Center, Imprints for Families, Forsyth County Public Library, Safe Kids of Forsyth County, Behind the Blue Line, the Children's Museum of Winston-Salem, and the Winston-Salem Fire Department.

Free bike helmets will be given away. For more information, call Donna Joyner at 336-716-0649.

### Calvary Baptist graduate completes basic training

Air Force Airman James M. Lewis has graduated from basic military training at



Lewis

Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

During the six weeks of training, the airman studied the Air Force mission, organization, and military customs and courtesies; performed drill and ceremony marches, and received physical training, rifle marksmanship, field training exercises, and special training in human relations.

In addition, airmen who complete basic training earn credits toward an associate degree through the Community College of the Air Force.

He is the son of Michael Lewis and Melanie Nachlas of Winston-Salem. Lewis is a 2006 graduate of Calvary Baptist Day School in Winston-Salem.

### Old Salem's Larson among Heritage Award winners

John Larson, the Vice President for Restoration at Old Salem Museums & Gardens, received the 2008 Heritage Award in the "Individual" category, from the Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission at an invitation-only ceremony Wednesday, May 7, at Salem Fine Arts Center, Salem College. The ceremony coincided with the commission's observance of May as "Historic Preservation Month."

The Heritage Awards are presented biannually to honor individuals, groups, organizations or businesses active in the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation or interpretation of the county's architectural, cultural, or natural heritage.

Larson, who has been employed at Old Salem for nearly 30 years, was nominated in the "Individual" category, which recognizes significant or lifetime achievement by an individual, by members of the Historic Resources Commission and Education Committee, and by his peers in the historic preservation community. A jury panel selected Larson for the Individual award, said Michelle McCullough, the historic resources coordinator for the Historic Resources Commission.

### Alumni Reunion Cookout and Festival in DC area

The Washington, DC Metropolitan Alumni Chapter is inviting the public to attend its annual Saint Augustine's College Family Reunion Cookout and Festival on Saturday, June 7.

It will begin at 12 noon at the Rock Creek Park, Grove #6 in the Washington, D.C. area.

The cookout and festival are open to all St. Aug families.

If you plan to attend or would like more information, contact the Washington DC Metropolitan Alumni chapter by calling 202-421-4119 or on line at <http://www.dcmetrostaalumni.com/>.

May 20, 2008

## Dear Community Members:

As your local Board of Health, we would like to invite and encourage you to participate in an important community activity which will take only an hour of your time per week for four weeks, in the comfort of your own home. Beginning on the evening of Tuesday, May 20, UNC-TV (Cable Channel 4, UHF or Direct TV Channel 26) will begin airing a series titled *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?* This broadcast is part of a nationwide public impact campaign with the objective of changing the way we view and seek to improve the health of our communities. As an individual who cares about the health and welfare of all residents of our community, we believe that you will find this series to be revealing and compelling.

Each airing is at 10:00 p.m. The complete schedule with episode titles is as follows:

- May 20: In Sickness and in Wealth - 1 hour
- May 27: When the Bough Breaks - 30 Minutes  
Becoming American - 30 minutes
- June 3: Bad Sugar - 30 minutes  
Place Matters - 30 minutes
- June 10: Collateral Damage - 30 minutes  
Not Just a Paycheck - 30 minutes

The Board of Health is interested in learning your thoughts and reactions to the *Unnatural Causes* documentary series. To comment on the series, go to [www.healthycommunity.ws](http://www.healthycommunity.ws)

Also, should you miss any of the episodes or if the timing is not convenient for you, the Health Department has obtained 8 copies of the documentary series on DVD, and it is available to interested groups who may wish to have group viewings, related discussion sessions, etc. For information about the documentary series or the availability of the DVD's, please go to [www.healthycommunity.ws](http://www.healthycommunity.ws)

Thank you for considering this request. We are certain that you will find the time investment to be worthwhile.

Sincerely,

Vera S. Robinson

Vera S. Robinson  
Chair

Dr. Ricky Sides

Dr. Ricky Sides  
Vice-Chair

[www.healthycommunity.ws](http://www.healthycommunity.ws)

## Warren Dental Center

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