

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Healthbeat

Students' pennies help fight leukemia

Students throughout Western North Carolina helped turn pennies into millions during Olive Garden's 14th-annual Pasta for Pennies program for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS).

More than 103,700 students in 170 local elementary, middle and high schools collected \$197,342.49 to support research and provide critical services to patients and their families. Nationally, a record \$5.8 million was raised, the most ever in the program's 14-year history.

During a three-week period throughout the school year, area students filled collection jars in their classrooms with pocket change. The class collecting the most money at each school was awarded a pasta party delivered to their classroom by their local Olive Garden restaurant.

This year, the top fundraising schools in western North Carolina included:

- McKee Road Elementary School in Charlotte with \$7,682.13;

- Crestdale Middle School in Matthews with \$6,978.18; and

- Weddington Middle School in Matthews with \$5,567.62.

Since its inception, Olive Garden's Pasta for Pennies has contributed more than \$42 million to LLS.

To learn more about how schools can take part in this grassroots effort, call 704-998-5012 or visit www.schoolandyouth.org/nc.

UNCG economist finds risk for kids of affluent working mothers

Children of affluent mothers who work more than 20 hours a week are more likely to be overweight and to perform poorly on cognitive tests than their peers whose mothers work less, according to a new study conducted by Dr. Christopher Ruhm,



Dr. Christopher Ruhm

published in the European journal *Labour Economics*, looked at advantaged and disadvantaged working mothers as defined by variables that included education, ethnicity, marital status and income prior to pregnancy. Children of mothers with high socioeconomic status who work outside the home did less well on vocabulary and math tests and weighed more than less-advantaged counterparts.

Conversely, children in low socioeconomic status families showed no cognitive impairment or weight gain when their mothers worked, and may even have benefited slightly from having working mothers.

The study, which focused on children ages 10-11, used data from multiple years of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth which is issued by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"High socioeconomic status adolescents often have access to enriching home environments that may include activities such as music lessons, visits to museums and nutritious meals," observes Ruhm. "When mothers work, their children may spend time in environments that don't include those enriching activities."

Jeff Furst will keynote MHA annual meeting

Jeff Furst, Director of Community Development with The Mental Health Association in North Carolina based in Raleigh, will be the featured, guest speaker during the annual meeting and awards presentation for The Mental Health Association in Forsyth County (MHA) on Thursday, Oct. 30 at 6:30 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Centenary United Methodist Church, 646 West Fifth St.

Furst's comments will focus on what is the "800 Pound Gorilla" in mental health and his topic indicates that we may be surprised to find out his answer.

"We are honored and delighted that Jeff Furst has accepted our invitation to speak at our annual meeting," said Andy Hagler, Executive Director of The Mental Health Association in Forsyth County. "His talk will, I am sure, be interesting, informative and based on what he states -surprising!"

The Mental Health Association's annual meeting will include an awards presentation, during which individuals, businesses, and groups will be recognized for their contributions and support of the mental health movement and their advocacy initiatives in Forsyth County. The event will also recognize members of the organization's governing board of directors for their contributions to the mental health movement as well as for their service in providing oversight and governance to The Mental Health Association in Forsyth County.

The cost to attend is \$20. The price includes dinner.

Contact The Mental Health Association in Forsyth County at 336-768-3880 for additional information or to make a reservation.

YWCA will hold health fair



CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The YWCA at 1201 Glade Street will host a Health Resources Fair on Monday, Oct. 13.

From 9 a.m. until noon, attendees can take advantage of massages, stroke screenings, herbalogy and other traditional and non-traditional healthcare topics.

Although the event is part of the Y's Member Appreciation Month events, it is open to the general public as well.

Special membership deals will also be offered at the fair,

including a half price offer. Free refreshments will also be provided.

"We're looking forward to providing an interesting and informative event to our members and the general public. Plus, it's a great chance for people to visit our facility at Glade Street and learn about all the programs we have to offer," said Sabrina Slade, the vice president at the Glade Street center.

For more information, call 336-722-5138, ext. 248.

BACK IN THE RACE

PRNewsFoto/Medtronic's Global Heroes

Legendary marathoner Alberto Salazar finishes his first race - the Medtronic Twin Cities 10 Mile Marathon in Minnesota on Oct. 5 - since collapsing from sudden cardiac arrest last year. Salazar is Honorary Team Captain of Medtronic's Global Heroes - 25 chronically ill runners who remain active with the help of medical technology. Salazar now wears an ICD (implantable cardioverter-defibrillator) to protect against a dangerously fast heart rate.



Kids address obesity crisis, win prizes

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Ten local youngsters have been selected as winners in the American Heart Association's Go Healthy Contest.

The kids were asked to write an essay addressing the growing childhood obesity crisis. Each laid out the importance of eating healthy and being active. More than 100 entries from children in the Triad and the surrounding counties were received. The 10 children selected received a certificate presented by Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines and Jeff McPherson, VP of the American Heart Association in the Triad. The kids also won three-month family memberships to their local YMCAs.

The winners and their families will also participate in the "By Kids, For Kids Forum" on Oct. 15 from 7 - 8 p.m. at Best Health in Hanes Mall. The forum, which is open to the public, will focus on the best ways to get children to reach their healthy goals.

The American Heart Association's Alliance for a Healthier Generation program, which is a partnership of the American Heart Association and the William J. Clinton Foundation, has the sole focus of ending the trend of childhood obesity.

* The four Forsyth County winners are: Audra Nicola, 8; Hilda Arroyo Zarate, 10; Carleigh Broome, 10; and Tyler LePere, 8.



Audra Nicola with Jeff McPherson.



Arroyo Zarate with Mayor Joines.



Carleigh Broome



Tyler LePere

Family stress the cause of many child homicides in North Carolina

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Last year, 25 children in North Carolina died at the hands of their parents or caregivers.

The N.C. Child Fatality Prevention Team says the numbers illustrate the need for communities across the state to continue providing broad-based support for families in these increasingly stressful times. Of the 25 homicide victims, only one-third showed physical signs of previous abuse or neglect.

"We know from research that when families in our communities face greater stress - including our increasingly difficult economic times, military deployments, lack of access to mental and physical health services and fewer community supports - children are at a greater risk of being abused," said Prevent Child Abuse CEO and President Rosie Allen. "Add these stressors to the everyday work of parenting, and children are likely to suffer."

High levels of stress in the home affect both children and parents by changing the way that parents interact with their children. The team says that stress makes parents and caregivers more likely to lash out in frustration.

Science is now showing that stress also has a direct impact on children. Research suggests that high levels of stress - called toxic stress - cause children to have lifelong physical and mental health problems. While some stress is good and helps a child grow and learn, toxic levels of stress damage the architecture of a child's developing brain, leading to problems like mental illness, obesity, social and behavioral problems. Toxic stress can also be caused by abuse and neglect as well as by exposure to conditions like extreme economic hardship.

"Child abuse is absolutely preventable," says Allen. "By making sure that our communities are equipped to support families - especially in hard times - we can save children from serious injury and from the lifelong psychological scars of abuse."

For more information, visit www.preventchildabuse.org.



Inflammatory Breast Cancer



According to the American Cancer Society, approximately 182,460 women in the United States will be found to have invasive breast cancer in 2008. Inflammatory breast cancer is a rapidly progressive form of breast cancer. It must be diagnosed quickly and treated aggressively to prevent spread. Fortunately, inflammatory breast cancer is very rare, accounting for only 1 percent to 5 percent of all breast cancers.

What is inflammatory breast cancer?

Inflammatory breast cancer is a locally advanced breast cancer which arises rapidly over weeks to months, not years. Inflammatory breast cancer is aptly named because the affected breast displays the same signs that occur with inflammation or infection of the breast. However, inflammatory breast cancer is not caused by infection; rather, it is due to cancer cells blocking the lymph vessels in the skin of the breast. Inflammatory breast cancer tends to occur in younger women. African-American women appear to be at a higher risk of developing the disease than white women.

What are the signs and symptoms of inflammatory breast cancer?

Symptoms of inflammatory breast cancer may include redness, swelling, and warmth in the breast, often without a distinct lump in the breast. The breast swelling is often sudden, making one breast appear larger than the other. The skin of the breast may also look pink, reddish purple, or bruised. The skin may look pitted, similar to the skin of an orange (called peau d'orange). Other symptoms may include nipple retraction, thickened skin, itching, or breast pain. The redness, warmth, or tenderness of the breast can be confused with an infection or mastitis of the breast. Doctors may initially suspect an infection and prescribe antibiotics. However, if the redness and symptoms do not improve, then your doctor needs to rule out inflammatory breast cancer by performing a needle or surgical breast biopsy.

How is inflammatory breast cancer diagnosed?

All patients should have a complete history and physical exam by their physician. A mammogram in combination with an ultrasound should be performed. Occasionally, no abnormalities are seen on mammogram and ultrasound. Like all types of breast cancer, the diagnosis is made by a biopsy, which is a procedure in which breast tissue is removed and examined under a microscope. Needle biopsies either with a fine needle aspirate, core needle biopsy,