

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Healthbeat

Health and Hispanic/Latino Culture Festival set for Oct. 26

GREENSBORO - A number of providers hope to cross the language barrier and bring health information in a day of fun, food and cultural events. The first Health and Hispanic/Latino Culture Festival will be Oct. 26 from 3 to 6 p.m. at Our Lady of Grace Catholic church.

"The Health and Hispanic/Latino Culture Festival grew out of a concern of several of the nurses in our program who serve multicultural congregations," Lelia Moore said. Moore heads the Moses Cone Health System Congregational Nurse Program. "They recognized that because of the language barrier, they had not been able to provide health screening, counseling and educational programs that are offered routinely to other English-speaking members."

More than 1,000 members of the area Hispanic community are expected to attend the event. It will feature music, traditional dances, food, door prizes and a variety of health screenings.

Moses Cone Health System, Guilford County Department of Public Health, Immigrant Health ACCESS, Alcohol and Drug Services of Guilford, Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church and other community partners will sponsor the festival.

N.C. A&T will hold session for prospective nursing students

The School of Nursing and the Office of Evening/Weekend Programs at N.C. A&T State University will host an informational session Nov. 4 for prospective students interested in nursing. The session will be held in Room 009, 1020 E. Wendover Ave., from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Information on nursing as a career, course offerings, admissions, financial aid, and student services will be presented and discussed.

For more information, contact Phyllis Cole or Veronica Ford, Office of Evening/Weekend Programs, (336) 334-7607 or e-mail colep@ncat.edu, fordv@ncat.edu; or Dawn Murphy, School of Nursing, (336) 334-7751 or e-mail dmurphy@ncat.edu.

The activity is free and open to the public.

Seminar on top cancer killer will be held Nov. 3

GREENSBORO - According to the American Cancer Society, lung cancer ranks as the top cancer killer of men and women in the United States. People can learn more about this disease at a free seminar at Moses Cone Health System Regional Cancer Center.

The good news about lung cancer is that as fewer people smoke, fewer people are developing lung cancer. The bad news for those who do is that it is one of the hardest cancers to cure.

The seminar is set for Nov. 3 from 6 to 7 p.m. at the Regional Cancer Center at Wesley Long Community Hospital. The seminar will present information about treatments, prevention and symptoms.

People interested can register by calling HealthConnect at 832-8000 or (800) 533-3463.

N.C. Office of Minority Health receives AmeriCorps grant

The N.C. Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service has awarded an AmeriCorps planning grant of \$10,000 to the Office of Minority Health and Disparities in the Department of Health and Human Services.

The Office of Minority Health will use the grant to develop an application for AmeriCorps funds to implement a program to address teen tobacco use prevention and other key health disparities of concern to African-American, Hispanic and Latino, and Native American communities in North Carolina.

Since 1994, more than 2,000 individuals have participated in AmeriCorps in North Carolina. AmeriCorps members tutor and mentor school-aged youths, improve the quality of child care for preschool children, address the need for affordable housing by building houses for low-income families, assist individuals with disabilities in gaining employment and provide immigrants and refugees with interpretation and translation services.

Underground pharmaceutical market endangers U.S. health

WASHINGTON (AP) - Illegal trade in pharmaceuticals has undercut the safety of the United States' system of distributing prescription drugs, The Washington Post reported.

As a result, the Post said in Sunday editions, many Americans are getting medication that is dangerous, watered-down or entirely ineffective.

In the first installment of a five-part series based on a yearlong investigation, the Post newspaper said: "Networks of middlemen, felons and other opportunists operating out of storefronts and garages fraudulently obtain deeply discounted medicines intended for nursing homes and hospices. Those drugs are ultimately sold to unwitting patients."

"Counterfeiters use pill-punching machines and special inks to produce near-perfect copies of the most popular and expensive drugs."

"Pharmaceutical peddlers take advantage of lax regulations to move millions of prescription drugs into the United States from Canada, Mexico and elsewhere." "Rogue medical merchants set up Internet pharmacies that serve as pipelines for narcotics, selling to drug abusers and others who never see doctors in person or undergo tests."

Altogether, the Post reported, the underground market for pharmaceuticals constitutes "a new form of organized crime that now threatens public health."

Many say Alzheimer's disease is the next major health crisis

BY VALENCIA MOHAMMAD
THE WASHINGTON AFRO

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - Since Anthony K. Sudler came on board as the president and CEO of the Alzheimer's Association, National Capital Area, he has begun a vigorous campaign to change the perception of Alzheimer's disease among African-Americans. Sudler, who is black, has served in an executive leadership role with the organization for the past nine years.

"I am on a crusade to change the understanding and acceptance of Alzheimer's disease within our community," Sudler said. "For a long time, our community looked at the disease as a mental illness, signs of growing old or something that you could not do anything about but hide."

Last year, the Congressional Black Caucus reported that the prevalence, incidence and cumulative risks of Alzheimer's are much higher in the African-American community than any other. According to Sudler, the study indicated African-Americans with a family history of high blood pressure and high cholesterol levels are most likely to get Alzheimer's disease.

"We also have to understand that it is not an old folks' disease. People in their mid-40s are coming down with the disease," explained Sudler. "Right now, Alzheimer's is not preventable.

but some medications will keep you functioning at the early stages of the disease for about two years."

During his tenure with the Alzheimer's Association, Sudler has served on four local boards of directors. He was selected to participate on 12 national Alzheimer's committees and task forces focusing on such initiatives as strategic planning, revenue sharing and the restructuring of the national governance process.

He recently led the Alzheimer's Association through a successful merger and is preparing the organization to meet the growing needs of the families dealing with Alzheimer's.

"We should bring support around the families that are caregiving someone with the disease for better quality of life for the diagnosed person," Sudler said.

According to the 2002 census, approximately 62 percent of the population of the Washington area is African-American, with a large number over 65. "That's how we know what we will be dealing with shortly. Alzheimer's will be the next major health crisis with the baby-boom age group. We need to lobby legislatures and church communities to band against the disease."

The association has a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week counseling and referral service. For information, call 1-866-259-0042 or check the Web at www.alz-nca.org.



Woman still haunted by Tuskegee experiments

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHARLESTON, S.C. - Decades later, Mary Starke Harper is still outraged by the Tuskegee experiments more than 60 years ago in which she unknowingly injected syphilis into healthy black men.

"I was very angry that they had me, a black person, doing something bad to black men," she said recently. "It was just a horrible feeling."

Harper is still haunted by the faces of the men, and her guilt has driven her to become an expert on aging and mental health and an outspoken advocate for patients' rights.

"After my experience in Tuskegee, I'm a stickler for informed consent," Harper, 84, said during a visit to the Medical University of South Carolina recently.

"We train minority people to ask questions about the research they're going to be participating in. A lot of black people, especially the older ones, won't ask questions," she said.

Harper was enrolled as a nursing student at the Tuskegee Institute when she was assigned as a volunteer to "The Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male."

She learned to inject black men, mostly uneducated sharecroppers, with syphilis. She had no idea then the injections would kill some of the men.

"I was young and had come from a very protective family, so a lot of the world I didn't know too much about," she said. "In those days in the nursing profession, you did what you were told and didn't ask questions."

During the study, which ran from 1932 until 1972, nearly 400 black men were injected with syphilis. The doctors doing the study wanted to see how long it took syphilis to kill, and so none of the men were treated.

By 1972, 128 were dead and many of their family members were infected.

Harper was heartbroken when she learned the truth in a newspaper account more than 30 years ago. Her horror was worse because she knew many of the men.

"We were always friendly and cordial to each other, and to think I had been doing something to those men, even



File Photo.
Proper cleaning around the house can prevent some forms of lead poisoning, experts say.

Lead poison and children

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

RALEIGH - Could your child be suffering from lead poisoning? Children under 6 years old are at the greatest risk of being poisoned by lead, a heavy metal used in making hundreds of common products. Young children are most at risk of lead poisoning because they are growing and developing so rapidly and they tend to put their hands or other objects, which may have been in contact with lead dust, into their mouths. Lead poisoning can cause severe health effects in children, but it is entirely preventable.

More than half a million children under the age of 6 live in North Carolina, and fewer than half of them have had their blood

tested for evidence of lead exposure. Between 1995 and 2002, more than 27,500 children between the ages of 6 months and 6 years living in North Carolina were found to have high blood lead levels (10 or more micrograms per deciliter).

Lead can affect nearly every system in the body. It can cause learning disabilities, behavioral problems, and at very high levels, seizures, coma or even death. Even exposures to small amounts of lead can cause adverse health effects. Some children who are poisoned by lead may have no apparent symptoms and can go undiagnosed and untreated for years, resulting in long-term problems.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

recommends that all children between the ages of 6 months and 6 years get tested for lead poisoning, especially children between the ages of 1 and 2. Treatment is available to help children who have high levels of lead in their blood.

Years ago, gasoline in America contained lead, and vehicle exhaust released lead into the environment. Lead was also widely used in house paint before 1978. In North Carolina, more than 1.5 million homes built before 1978 may contain lead paint, which can flake, peel or release lead-contaminated dust. Lead is also commonly found in the soil along the drip line of homes due to the weathering of exterior paint. Children

See **Lead** on C4

Caribbean reports that region has had success in HIV fight

BY TONY BEST
THE CARIB NEWS

NEW YORK (NNPA) - A "tremendous success story."

That's how Sir George Alleyne, a former director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), has described the results of national campaigns to lower the number of people living with HIV/AIDS infection in the Caribbean.

"I am impressed with the efforts they are making," Alleyne said. "Formerly, a lot of the approach was uniquely

in terms of the prevention because much of the treatment of AIDS was beyond the financial capabilities of a majority of the countries. But now, there is a great move afoot to make treatment very widely available and

there are some great, great success stories. The Bahamas is a tremendous success story as far as AIDS is concerned. So is Barbados, for example."

Alleyne told the Caribbean News that Caricom states understood the dangers HIV/AIDS infection posed to their future development and were doing something about it.

"In general, the Caricom countries have become seized with the importance of AIDS," he said. "When we say that the Caribbean is a region with the highest prevalence rate (out-



Alleyne

See **HIV** on C5