

**HEALTH COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE**

2006 - What a Ride!

In February, Dr. Kenneth Rupp retired after 42 years of service to Portage County Health Department. Dr. Rupp's mark on this County will not soon be forgotten. He was able to bring the Health Department from financial crisis to one of stability at a maintenance level. His leadership was key. We will certainly miss Dr. Rupp.



My first task was to complete a new budget for 2007. We made major cuts and were able to balance a budget that will allow us to operate for one more year.

Our attempt to pass a levy was spearheaded by Glenn and Ruth Saltzman. They were tireless and we owe them a tremendous amount of gratitude. However, our levy once again failed. We will try and try again. Without an increase in financial support we will once again raise fees. The problem we face is that these increases only allow us to operate with minimum staff and minimal programs. We are not able to offer the citizens of Portage County the services that will help to improve their lives. Keep us in mind the next time you enter the polling booth.

Last year Dr. Rupp wrote of new challenges, this year has not been different. We now are charged by the Ohio Department of Health to enforce new home sewage treatment system rules and the still to be announced Ohio smoking rules. Both new programs will be costly and put new constraints on our already stretched manpower. These challenges only make our jobs more interesting and the opportunity to improve the health of our community is the reason for our existence. Let us hope that we can continue far into the future.

It is with pleasure that we continue to serve the citizens of Portage County.

Sincerely,

DuWayne O. Porter, M.P.H., R.S.  
Health Commissioner

**MEET THE BOARD OF HEALTH**



Robert Palmer  
President



Dale Miller  
Vice President



Bonnie Bailey  
Member



Dr. Howard Minott  
Member

Dr. Robert Jackson  
Member

James Bierlair  
Member



Amy Hammar  
Member

### **NURSING DIVISION**

Kelly Engelhart, R.N., B.S.N., Director  
Kim Villers, R.N., B.S.N., PHN II  
Rosemary Ferraro, R.N., B.S.N., PHN II  
Kathy Egan, Clerk 2  
Cristine Whittington, Clerk 2  
David Bentz, BS, Health Educator (July 2006)

Describing the work of public health nursing is not always easy. We don't have inspections to do or permits or licenses to issue. The work of public health nursing is caring for the people of the Portage County community by **prevention** (immunizations), **interventions** (disease investigation) and **evaluation** (performance measurement improvement). We spent a lot of time and energy on the intervention phase of public health nursing in 2006 "*Fighting infectious diseases*" as we had significant disease outbreaks or clusters of infectious diseases which included:

- **Active Tuberculosis (TB)** cases in the City of Kent, requiring testing of 96 contacts and tracking and following 31 infected contacts and providing directly observed therapy (DOT) to the active TB patients.

- **Pertussis (Whooping Cough)** outbreaks among our medically fragile children at Hattie Larlham and Happy Day School and other local school districts where 189 teachers, healthcare workers and students received recommended preventive antibiotic treatment.
- **Hepatitis A** at Kent State University. A food service worker was diagnosed with acute Hepatitis A viral infection and Portage County public health nurses coordinated a huge effort to administer a protective shot to 432 individuals exposed to the Hepatitis A virus.
- **Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus* (MRSA)** a skin infection that is becoming more prevalent in our community. There were 465 culture positive cases report at RMH in 2006.

#### **New Programs in 2006:**

##### **Pandemic Influenza Health Education**

Additional grant funding allowed us to hire a health educator for the first time in six (6) years. This position is a temporary grant funded position allocated for public awareness, education specific to pandemic influenza. Dave Bentz was hired for this position in July of 2006 and has coordinated, presented and planned more than 45 presentations to 9 community groups. These include:

- Schools
- Long term care facilities
- RMH emergency room staff
- Non-profit social service organization leaders
- Government leaders and elected officials
- Civic groups
- Universities and Colleges
- Township community residents
- Local business

Dave also collaborated with agencies related to planning and preparedness and is facilitating the distribution of masks to our local schools. We were able to provide masks for all school personnel and students in Portage County providing them with protection for respiratory illnesses.

##### **Outreach Influenza Clinics**

2006 we changed our approach to providing influenza vaccine to the community. We took the influenza vaccine to them. We held influenza clinics in all but 4 townships or villages in the county, 19 in all. We administered 1,803 flu shots in these clinics with the assistance of our volunteer nurses. We activated our registry of volunteer nurses in which we had 14 volunteers to assist in their local communities. We are very fortunate to have nurses willing to assist anytime not only during an emergency. We felt the response

from the public was overwhelmingly positive and we plan to continue this outreach service to our community.

#### **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)**

December 11, 2006 Portage County became an official Medical Reserve Corps with our unit registered nationally with the Office of the Surgeon General. The Portage County Health Department is the coordinating agency for Portage County's MRC. Our MRC has been active since 2002 and includes over 500 volunteer nurses, pharmacists and physicians. The goal for 2007 is to expand the unit to include all medical profession disciplines.

#### **Medical Direction:**

Half of 2006 was the first time in 27 years that the Portage County Health Department has had medical direction separate from the administrative officer, the Health Commissioner. Dr. Angela DeJulius, M.D., M.P.H., was hired part time in July, 2006. She works 4 hours a week and provides medical direction for many of our nursing programs including Immunization standing orders for our clinics, direction related to TB patients and rabies exposures. Dr. DeJulius has been proactive in supporting the school nurses in our county by providing standing orders and medical direction for their Automated External Defibrillators (AED). She has initiated task forces for identified problems related to MRSA and Influenza vaccine distribution in the community. Dr. DeJulius is a wonderful addition to our leadership team at the Portage County Health Department.

#### **Data from Nursing Programs and Services are Identified below:**

**Immunization Clinics** 9,752 Immunizations administered

- 1,807 childhood immunizations administered to 810 kids
- 421 International Travel vaccines administered.

**Communicable Disease Reporting** 5,432 Communicable Diseases reported

- 781 needing public health nursing follow up with sexually transmitted diseases as the highest infectious diseases reported with 424.

**Animal Bite Reports** 259 animal bites reported

- all animal bites are contacted and followed up to advise quarantine and observe after the quarantine

**Influenza shots** 4,483 administered

**TB Tests** 1,076 TB tests administered

- 57 positive reactors were identified

**Wellness (Health Risk Assessments)** 198 assessments provided to Portage County employees

- 47% of county employees screened were overweight
- 19% of employees screened had elevated blood cholesterol levels

**Hepatitis B clinics** 352 HBV vaccine administered

- at 24 different sites

**Physicals for PPIC** 22 pre-employment physicals conducted

**ODH Grants:**

The Nursing Division directs two grants from the Ohio Department of Health: the Immunization Action Plan Grant (IAP) and the Public Health Infrastructure Grant (PHI).

The IAP Grant is targeted to increase the immunization rates of children from birth to age three (3) in Portage County. Assessments of immunization coverage rates for children under age three in Portage County indicate our rates are only at 65%. The National and State objective is to have 90% of our children under age three adequately immunized by 2010. Rosemary Ferraro, R.N., B.S.N., is the IAP coordinator and directs the programs provided by the grant. The programs are delivered county-wide including the cities of Kent and Ravenna. The emphasis of the grant is physician provider education and training.

The PHI Grant is targeted to increase the infrastructure of public health departments related to emergency preparedness and response in the entire county, including the cities of Kent and Ravenna. The grant when originally initiated in 2002 was targeted toward Bioterrorism Preparedness. The grant objective scope has broadened to include all hazard emergency preparedness. This year also included significant resources for Pandemic Influenza Planning and Preparedness. Kim Villers, R.N., B.S.N., is our Bioterrorism Coordinator and coordinates and tracks all training, education and preparedness activities. Writing of plans and policies related to emergency preparedness is the responsibility of the Nursing Director with direction from the triad of leadership: Health Commissioner, Medical Director, Nursing Director, and Environmental Health Director.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES 2006**

Loyd Groves, R.S., Director

- Jack Madved ... B.S., R.S., Sanitarian
- Beth Ahrens ... B.S., R.S., Sanitarian
- Richard Lashley ... B.S., R.S., Sanitarian
- Kevin Watson ... B.S., R.S., Sanitarian
- Stanley Carlisle... B.S., R.S., Sanitarian
- Adam Harris ... B.S., R.S., Sanitarian
- Tom Brannon ... Environmental Technician
- Ken Dye ... Certified Plumbing Inspector

New rules governing home sewage treatment systems in Ohio went into effect January 1, 2007. Much of 2006 was devoted to learning, understanding, and preparing for their implementation. They involve major changes in how all aspects of the sewage system program is handled. For example, the evaluation of a lot to determine if it is acceptable for the installation of a new sewage treatment system must now include a soil study done by a professional soil scientist. Soil type plays a very important role in determining which kind of system can be used. There are now more types of systems available for use, including the mound system and a drip distribution system. The new regulations triple the number of inspections that this Department must do for each new system. We must now inspect the proposed on-lot layout, then the actual installation construction, plus the operation of the system within 18 months of start-up to confirm that it is operating properly. Since more work is involved and we cannot afford

to hire additional people, we have had to divert time from staff who were not previously involved with the sewage program, taking them away from other programs. That has caused longer time frames for them to get those jobs done.

In 2007, new regulations governing the safety and health aspects of the school environment will become effective. Some members of the Environmental staff will need to become trained for that program and, again, these inspections will require more time than they previously did, spreading our staff even thinner.

The Environmental staff has also been required to be training in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) program which involves the procedures and hierarchy for handling a Bioterrorism incident so we will be prepared in case of an attack. This involved very intensive training and passing difficult competency testing. More training will continue in 2007.

In 2006, the Department again participated in the Ohio Department of Health's program to manually distribute rabies vaccine packets in Aurora and Streetsboro to prevent the spread of raccoon rabies that has occurred in the counties north of Portage. (Mantua, Hiram and Nelson are treated by airplane drops of the vaccine.) We expect this program to continue in 2007. Many Department hours were devoted to this.

Year round the Environmental staff continues to make inspections and enforce regulations for restaurants, grocery stores, schools, household and small commercial sewage treatment systems, wells, campgrounds, manufactured home parks, public swimming pools and spas, motels and hotels, solid waste, and plumbing so the health and safety of Portage County residents can be protected.

***Plumbing Inspections:***

<u>2006</u>	<u>Rough</u>	<u>Final</u>	<u>On Site</u> <u>Consultations</u>
Residential	555	490	112
Commercial	112	49	0
Clear Water		36	
Reinspections*	153		
Telephone Consultations			283
Total Number of Inspections ...			1,395
Plumbing Permits Issued .....			577
Clear Water Permits .....			37
Plumbers Registered .....			121
Reinspections .....			157

\* Rough and Final

Program                      Sites    Inspections    Consultations

Sewage Systems	443	1534*****	459
Septic Permits	381	-	-
Lot Eval. (Backhoes)	252	-	-
Aeration Inspection		1366*****	
Home Sale Septic Insp.	123	-	-
Water Supply Systems	288	699	67
Water Samples	691	691	7
Mobile Home Parks	34	181	180
Food Service Insp.	479*	734	32
Nuisances	105	1340	411
Recreational Camps	40	74	67
Swimming Pools, Spas and Beaches	82	185	185
Marinas	-	-	-
Schools	44	77	75
Food Establishments	125	259	71
Motels/Hotels	26	33	35
Solid Waste Landfill/ Transfer Facilities**	6	59	44
Construction and Demolition**	1	5	-
Nuisances - S.W.	73	678	199
Infectious Waste***	65	11	12
Water Samples	10	-	2
Refuse Haulers	118	37	37
Methane Gas Well Inspections	-	-	-
	103	413	0

\* Includes Vending Licenses

\*\* Includes Closed Landfills still under inspection

\*\*\* 1 Large Generator (NEOUCOM)

\*\*\*\*\* Includes commercial wastewater inspections

\*\*\*\*\* Includes septic site review inspections

### **ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION**

Connie Leedom, Executive Secretary, Director  
 Carey Meissner . . . . Account Clerk 1  
 Dorothy Filing . . . . Typist 2  
 Alzine Weimer . . . . Typist 2  
 Judi Rettig . . . . Clerk 2  
 Debbie Stall . . . . Account Clerk 2

The Administrative Division's purpose is to ensure that the daily operations of public health are satisfied on a timely basis, which includes Accounting, Budgeting, Personnel and State Reporting Programs.

Maintaining statistics of public health is an essential activity of this division. These statistics provide the foundation upon which all parts of public health programs are constructed.

In addition to the personal and vocal interaction with the public, these personnel maintain the flow of written information and communication to the public as a result of the field personnel's investigation and inspections.

An important role of this division is our customer relations contact and providing courteous and personalized attention. Our customers are #1.

A few Administrative staff members are on the Bioterrorism First Response Team.

In closing, I would like to elaborate on one word and that is, appreciate. The Administrative Staff reflects a tremendous amount of integrity, energy and dedication in performing their job duties. This energy, integrity and dedication is reflected each day in order to protect the lives and health of the citizens of Portage County.

**ANNUAL FINANCIAL  
2006**

**2006 Receipts**

**Health**

Balance 12/31/05 . . . . .	\$ 427,039
2006 Health Levy . . . . .	328,751
State Subsidy . . . . .	33,499
Inspections . . . . .	143,309
License/Registration . . . . .	205,598
Permits . . . . .	383,909
Water Tests . . . . .	22,555
Contracts - Nursing/Misc. . . . .	40,696
Immunization Clinic/Medicaid . . . . .	155,403
Fines . . . . .	205
Refunds Reimb . . . . .	23
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>\$1,740,987</u></b>

**Infrastructure Grant - 8901**

Balance 12/31/05 . . . . .	\$ 37,601
Revenue . . . . .	160,737
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 198,338</u></b>

**Immunization Grant - 8905**

Balance 12/31/05 . . . . .	\$ 8,882
Revenue . . . . .	35,600
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 44,482</u></b>

**Pools/Spas "P" - 8902**

Balance 12/31/05 . . . . .	\$ 3,239
Revenue . . . . .	21,744
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 24,983</u></b>

**Food Service/Food Establishments "G" - 8903**

Balance 12/31/05 . . . . .	\$ 16,393
Revenue . . . . .	189,329
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 205,722</b>

**Solid Waste - 8906**

Balance 12/31/05 . . . . .	\$ 18,294
Revenue: Agreement . . . . .	109,068
Fees . . . . .	250
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 127,612</b>

**2006 Available Revenue      \$2,342,124**

**ANNUAL FINANCIAL  
2006**

**2006 Expenditures**

Salaries . . . . .	\$1,072,704
P.E.R.S. . . . .	142,193
Worker's Compensation . . . . .	21,230
Medicare, Hospital, Life . . . . .	231,867
Contract Services (Prof. Svcs)	15,725
Contract (Contract Svcs) . . . . .	21,253
Lab Testing . . . . .	9,534
Advertising & Printing . . . . .	4,872
DRETAC/Auditor . . . . .	5,638
Supplies . . . . .	86,336
Travel & Expenditures . . . . .	54,661
Equipment . . . . .	10,546
Refunds . . . . .	4,512
Remit to State . . . . .	20,174
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,701,245</b>

**Food Service/Food Establishments - 8903**

Remit to State . . . . .	<b>\$ 14,248</b>
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**Pools/Spas - 8902**

Remit to State . . . . .	<b>\$ 4,570</b>
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**Total 2006 Expenditures      \$1,720,063**

**December 31, 2005 Balances**

Health 8900 . . . . .	\$ 484,815
Food/Vending 8903 . . . . .	40,130
Pools/Spas 8902 . . . . .	3,682
PH Infrastructure Grant 8901 . . . . .	59,851
Immunization Action Grant 8905 . . . . .	8,864
Solid Waste Agreement 8906 . . . . .	24,719
<b>Total Cash Balances</b>	<b>\$ 622,061</b>

**Reserve for Encumbrances (\$ 8,415)**

**Total Balance 12/31/06      \$ 613,646**