

The Alabama Environmentalist

March 2005 Issue

Special points of interest:

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THE ALABAMA ENVIRONMENTALIST
is the newsletter of the Alabama Environmental Health Association, Inc. Founded in 1954, AEHA is a professional association of individuals working within the field of environmental health. AEHA is an affiliate of the National Environmental Health Association. To contact the editor, please call 256-236-3274, fax 256-237-7974 or e-mail lburell@adph.state.al.us

AEHA, Inc.
P. O. Box 129
Fayette, AL. 35555.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings Everyone! What a year this is turning out to be! It began for me in July with the Interstate Environmental Health Seminar. Thanks to a whole lot of people, the conference was a great success with only a few minor disappointments. Our Silent Auction raised \$500 for our Alabama Environmental Health Association Scholarship Fund. Soon after the conference came Hurricane Ivan and we are still dealing with the aftermath.

Your AEHA Board has also been very busy with many projects. Tim Hatch has been working on our first AEHA website. Lem Burell has been busy planning a great ALPHA conference. Tom Jensen and the rest of the board are planning another great annual conference

for this summer. The week of April 17 through the 24 will mark Environmental Health Week. Also, we have lined up some informative speakers for our chapter meetings this year. If there is a project that you would like for the board to take on, please call me at 251-972-6834 or email me at cplumb@adph.state.al.us.

Keep up the great work!
Your President,
Charlotte Plumb



Environmental Health Week is April 17-23, 2005

2005 AEHA CONFERENCE PLANNED FOR PERDIDO BEACH RESORT

Tom Jensen, President-Elect and Conference Planning Chairman, has thrown a counterpunch at old Hurricane Ivan with the help of one of the elite hotels on the old Redneck Riviera. The Perdido Beach Resort at Orange Beach will be ready to host the 2005 AEHA Annual Educational Conference and Business Meeting on August 11 and 12. Conference Registration Fee will be \$59. The fee will include a Hospitality Period on Thursday, August 11; and a breakfast buffet and the Awards Luncheon on Friday, August 12. A block of rooms are reserved for August 10 and 11 at the rate of \$119 per night. This rate may be honored for the days immediately before or after the conference, subject to the hotels approval. Tom has secured at least three event sponsors for the conference. They are the ADPH Lead Certification Program, Bob Guthrie and Associates and Infiltrator Systems. A Silent Auction is also planned and will need the support of each chapter. An exciting array of speakers have committed to presentations at the conference. They include:

1. Greg Lein, AL Dept of Conservation and Natural Resources. "Wild Alabama," an overview of



Charlotte Plumb,
AEHA President and
2004 Sanitarian of the Year

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE NEEDS YOUR HELP

tarian of the Year or Ansel C. Mullins Awards or any photos, conference materials, etc.....pertaining to the AEHA, could you please share the information with me. I will document these materials for future use and enjoyment of our organization.

Thank You,
Marie Stephens

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Address:

Marshall County Health Department
P.O. Drawer 339
Guntersville, AL 35976



Dr. Don Williamson, State Health Officer of Alabama addresses the assembly to kick off the AEHA Annual Education Conference in Point Clear, Alabama on July 7, 2004

"I ain't never seen anything like that before"

THE FUNERAL *(contributed by Tim Hatch)*

A young preacher was asked by a funeral director to hold a graveside service for a man who died with no family or friends. The funeral was held way back in the country and the young preacher got lost on the way.

When he arrived an hour late, he saw a backhoe and crew, but the hearse was nowhere in sight. The workmen were eating lunch. The diligent pastor went to the open grave to find the vault lid in place. But, still he preached an impassioned and lengthy service.

Returning to his car, the young preacher felt that he had done his duty and he would leave with a renewed sense of purpose and dedication, in spite of his tardiness.

As he got into his car, he overheard one of the workers talking to another worker: "I've been putting in septic tanks for 20 years, and ain't never seen anything like that before."

2005 AEHA CONFERENCE PLANNED FOR PERDIDO BEACH RESORT - continued from Pg. 1

the Forever Wild Program, Forest Legacy Program and Alabama Wilderness Areas Conservancy Program.

2. Ruth Underwood, PHAs 7 & 9. "Public Health Perspective on Hurricane Ivan."
3. Thad Pittman, Randall Farris, Lynn Scott, ADPH. "Beyond Controlled Fill: Engineer Design Alternatives for Special Conditions."
4. Bob Guthrie, Guthrie & Associates. "Decentralized Wastewater Systems in Alabama."

I am the chairperson for the Northern Chapter of the AEHA. I have been delegated the responsibility of compiling information on the history of the AEHA. If you have knowledge of past winners of the Sani-

THE ALPHA CONFERENCE "Community Partnerships: Navigating the Course for a Healthy Alabama"

April 21 – 22, 2005
Bryant Conference Center
Tuscaloosa, AL

For information, contact Lem Burell at 256-236-3274 – lburell@adph.state.al.us



Kevin Hicks, PHA 10 and Kristina Fox-Davis, Barbour County take some time to "cut loose" at Point Clear last July's AEHA Annual Education Conference

AEHA BOARD NOTES

1. By the end of the February-March chapter meetings, all chapters should have their nominees in place for the Sanitarian of the Year and Ansel Mullins Awards. The deadline for Awards Submittals for these nominees is June 1, 2005.

Awards should be submitted to Charlotte Plumb, President, AEHA, Inc., c/o Baldwin County Health Department.

2. **DEADLINE** for members to re-new their membership for 2005 at the rate of \$15 is March 30, 2005. Membership is \$20 for new members or former members, including those who

fail to renew by March 30.

3. A class project of Brewbaker Technical School in Montgomery is to develop a web site for AEHA. When completed, this web site will be a home for this electronic newsletter, information about the association and membership information.

4. After the current round of Chapter Meetings is completed in February and March, the next educational event for AEHA will be the Annual Education Conference, August 11-12.

The next round of Chapter Meetings will be over two months after the AEC. Topics will include a Solid Waste Transfer Station Field Trip, Pit Privies and "The Talladega Super Speedway Experience: Just Another Little Temporary Event!"

Meeting dates will be:

October 18 South East
October 25 Northern
October 19 South West
October 20 West Central
October 26 East Central

(Locations are to be determined.)



DECENTRALIZED ONSITE SEWAGE SYSTEMS

By Jimmy Coles, PE

Director, Division of Community Services, Alabama Dept. of Public Health

Without a doubt, decentralized onsite sewage systems are proven technology. It is the same technology that the cities use except on a smaller scale. The sand filter has been around in some form for at least fifty years. The bottom line is you either blow air through sewage or trickle it through some medium to treat it. That is what big city sewer systems do. That is what decentralized systems do. That is what all systems do.

The secret to success with decentralized systems is good design, and good management, the same as with big systems. That is what we are trying to accomplish with all this business (management entity & performance permitting). In the past, sewer was run by governments because of the scale of it, but these systems make it possible for others to get into the business and we are trying to put those users in the same place as people in the city on the big sewer - which in most cases has good design and good management. But the big systems are getting old, and they LEAK. And as you know, cities are already using the smaller technology, Mobile for example, because of the economics of it. It is just cheaper in many cases to treat the sewage in smaller batches close to where it is generated than to pump it miles to get it into some creek. Think about it, which is the most logical and environmentally sound, pumping millions of gallons of sewage mile to concentrate it and dump into a stream or to treat it close to the source and put into the soil in small doses which will give further treatment and keep it out of the stream. Just think, if the model was the decentralized system and you proposed that we pay more to install centralized sewer systems, people would think you were crazy.

I think that in five to ten years it will be the primary method of treatment and disposal because of the economics of it. Cities will be using it. Recently, a federal judge told Atlanta that they had to spend billions in the next ten years to fix their central system which does not work because it is leaking millions of gallons of sewage into the streams with every rain as many centralized systems are. The only thing that is saving us is dilution. If Atlanta, and other communities, do not consider a combination of these type systems with their central sewer system, they will be making a big mistake.

*"Keep it out of
the stream"*

Jimmy Coles, PE



AEHA's 2004 Ansel Mullins Award winner, Audra Jones of Tallapoosa County

We're On The Web!
www.aeha-online.org



Jim Brooks, Monroe County and Sherry Bradley with the Bureau of Environmental Services, catch up on old times in Point Clear, AL.



Photos in this newsletter by John Davis, Calhoun County

2003-2004 OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

- CHARLOTTE PLUMB, President, Baldwin County Health Department (Southwest Chapter)
- TERRY YOUNG, Past President, St. Clair County Health Department (East Central Chapter)
- MITZI CHESSER, Past President, Montgomery County Health Department (Southeast Chapter)
- THOMAS JENSEN, President-Elect, Madison County Health Department (Northern Chapter)
- TIM HATCH, First Vice-President, Bureau of Environmental Services (Southeast Chapter)
- GINA JACKSON, East Central Chapter Chair, Blount County Health Department
- MARIE STEPHENS, Northern Chapter Chair, Marshall County Health Department
- WANDA EDBERG, South East Chapter Chair, Coffee County Health Department
- KENDALL BUSH, South West Chapter Chair, Clarke County Health Department
- CHRISTIE WHITE, West Central Chapter Chair, ADPH-Bureau of Environmental Services
- TRINA GRIFFIN, Training Branch Representative (Southeast Chapter)
- NANCY MADDOX, Secretary-Treasurer, Fayette County Health Dept (West Central Chapter)
- LEMUEL BURELL, Newsletter Editor, Public Health Area VI, Anniston (East Central Chapter)

ALABAMA ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Name _____
 Date _____
 Employer _____
 Position _____
 Corresponding Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
 E-mail Address: _____
 I wish to affiliate with the _____ Chapter of AEHA.

Membership Fee (Check one--Make checks payable to AEHA):

- _____ Individual New Member--\$20 Payable for new member for 2005
- _____ Individual Continuing Member--\$15 Payable for 2005 Year before March 30, 2005
- _____ Retired Member--\$0--Retired as Active Member in the year _____
- _____ Associate Member--\$100

**Mail To: Nancy Maddox
 AEHA, Inc.
 P. O. Box 129
 Fayette, AL. 35555.**

Please copy or complete this application and submit it with your membership fee so that our records may be kept up to date on you. Remember that by keeping your membership current without lapse, AEHA members save on annual dues, help reduce the administrative cost of sending notices and contribute to maintaining the strength, integrity and professionalism of the Association.

59TH ANNUAL INTERSTATE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SEMINAR

**JULY 20-22, 2005
 CLARION HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER
 HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND**

