Dedicated to YOUR Wellbeing
Kendall County Health Department

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Wishing Every Blessing to Becki

After a long professional career at the Health Department, our dear friend, Becki Rudolph, is retiring. Becki has worked at the Health Department for 32 years. Becki stated, “I remember being unsure of what I was doing. I was grateful for the people that were willing to share their knowledge with me, and those that were patient. There was an office manager who was very patient and taught me a lot of office procedure and etiquette. When I came to the Health Department, there were nice people that taught me about public health and took the time to explain things to me because I had no idea what health departments did.”

Throughout her career Becki experienced many changes. Becki reflected, “In 32 years, the Health Department went from being comprised of seven people to 50 people. When I came, I answered the phone, did bookkeeping, and typed orders. There is much more responsibility in my work now, as it is no longer a clerical job.”

As a life-long learner, Becki shared, “Everyday I learn something and use what I learn. One needs to be able to accept other perspectives, we have to be open to diverse ways of thinking. These are things that are not necessarily taught in school, but must be learned through doing.”

Through her life experiences, Becki has gained a wealth of wisdom. Becki suggests, “Learn to let things go and try not to let things bother you. Recently, I have come to realize that I have touched more lives than I had previously thought, so it is important for all of us to keep in mind that we are all touching the lives of others. Since we all touch others, the choice we each have to make is whether we touch others in a positive or in a negative way.”

In her final reflection Becki stated, “I will always remember enjoying speaking with and working with the kids at our immunization clinics. I have also really enjoyed working with those that have been here over the years. There have been some lovely people along the way.”

Dr. Tokars stated, “What an honor it has been for me working alongside her leadership.”

We wish Becki every blessing upon her retirement. Thank you for your dedication and service to the residents of Kendall County. You have made an extraordinary impact on public health.

Mental Health Forum
14th District Congresswomen Lauren Underwood and Massachusetts Congressman Joe Kennedy III hosted a mental health forum in late July at the Health Department. This dialogue provided an opportunity for community members to share experiences with mental health and discussed ways Congress can work to improve access to mental health care and supportive services.

In July, Dr. Ngozi Ezike and key leadership staff of the Illinois Department of Public Health met with Northern Illinois Public Health Consortium Directors for a productive public health dialogue.
Tick-borne diseases are on the rise across the United States with Lyme disease being the most common. Surveillance work in our county has shown us that it is present in the local deer tick population as well. Recently, we’ve also become aware of other tick related diseases like Rocky Mountain spotted fever and Heartland virus that can make their way into our county. These different diseases are often transmitted by different ticks. While Lyme diseases transmitted through the bite of the deer tick, Rocky Mountain Spotted fever can be transmitted by another local tick, the American dog tick.

Since 2016, we have surveyed sites throughout the County for the presence of deer and dog ticks using tick drags. This year, staff also developed a carbon dioxide trap in hopes of possibly collecting Lone Star ticks as well. These ticks have been found to carry Heartland virus in neighboring counties. Work will continue and surveillance findings will continue to be shared on the Health Department website.

Follow these simple steps to keep yourself safe from ticks:

- Wear long-sleeves shirts, long trousers, boots or sturdy shoes. Ticks are easier to detect on light-colored clothing.
- Use insect repellent containing 20 percent DEET primarily to clothes. Follow label instructions.
- Walk in the center of trails so weeds do not brush against you.
- Check yourself, children and other family members every two to three hours for ticks. Most ticks seldom attach quickly and rarely transmit disease organisms until they have been attached four or more hours.
- If your pets spend time outdoors, check them for ticks, too.
- If ticks are crawling on the outside of clothes, they can be removed with masking tape or cellophane tape.
- If a tick has attached, remove it promptly. Do not burn the tick with a match or cover it with petroleum jelly or nail polish. Do not use bare hands to remove the tick because tick secretions may carry disease.

For more information on tick-borne illnesses in Kendall County, please call (630)553-9100.

Breastfeeding and Marijuana Use

Breastfeeding has many health benefits for both the baby and the mother. However, there is NO safe amount of marijuana use during or after pregnancy. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) consumed by the mother enters her breast milk and can be passed from the mother’s milk to her baby, potentially affecting the baby. THC is stored in body fat. A baby’s brain and body are made with a lot of fat. Since your baby’s brain and body may store THC for a long time, you should not use marijuana while you are breastfeeding. If you have questions or concerns, please call the Health Department at (630)553-9100.
In Remembrance

Sandra Lambert, *the M&M Lady*, a long time employee of the Kendall County Health Department passed away July 13, 2019. Sandra worked in the Community Action Unit and was an advocate for over 21 years. All who crossed her threshold were star struck by the M&M memorabilia that was throughout her office, earning her the nickname, *the M&M Lady*. Sandra had a passion for serving senior citizens and held the role of Vice-President of the Kendall County Senior Providers. With this desire to serve seniors, she also assisted with the Senior Social Support Group and the Senior Christmas basket program. Sandra was passionate about helping all those in need throughout Kendall County. Sandra was a true Community Action warrior, “HELPING PEOPLE CHANGING LIVES.” Sandra will be dearly missed.

Partnering for Our Youth

The Kendall County Health Department was proud to partner with the Kendall County Sheriff’s Office in supporting the future development of our community youth through the Sheriff’s Office Youth Academy. In the area of behavioral health the youth were exposed to an abbreviated Law Enforcement Behavioral Health Training, addiction risk and prevention, and mental health protection. The youth also learned about personal development and leadership. During this presentation they learned what employers look for in a new workforce, essential leadership qualities and understanding the importance of humility in our work. The main area of discussion was understanding behavioral health and criminal justice work and how these professions intersect in our everyday work. It was our pleasure and such a joy to work with these future leaders.

Kendall County Solid Waste Plan

Implemented by health department staff, Kendall County’s Solid Waste Management Plan is requirement of Illinois’ Solid Waste Planning and Recycling Act. The Act, which went into effect in 1989, requires counties to craft, implement and update solid waste management plans designed to promote the safe and effective management of our community’s residential and commercial wastes - with an emphasis on, where possible, reducing the volume of our waste stream, reusing or repurposing typically discarded materials, and of course materials recycling. The health department and the County Board work together to ensure that this plan receives a comprehensive review and update every five years, with the participation of a broad and diverse cross-section of our community members, partners and stakeholders.

*Kendall County's Solid Waste Management Plan*, was initially crafted and adopted on May 1995, and has been updated every 5 years. Our current plan is under review, an update to be submitted to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency in early 2020. For more information, please call (630)553-9100.

Did you see us at the Plano Back to School Bash? We were there, handing out important health information about all of our services! Look for us at your event!
For questions about the newsletter, please call RaeAnn VanGundy at (630)553-8064 or email her at rvangundy@co.kendall.il.us

Kendall County Health Department
811 West John St.
Yorkville, IL 60560
(630)553-9100
(630)553-9506 Fax

Looking for something? Click here to see the Resource Directory.

Brenda Ulrich
Thank you for your distinguished dedication to the Board of Health and all residents. You are a true servant.

Mission Statement
The mission of the Kendall County Health Department is to promote physical health, mental health, environmental health, protect the community’s health, prevent disease, and promote family economic self-sufficiency through both person based services and population based services.

B O A R D  O F  H E A L T H  M E M B E R S

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Illinois Department of Public Health

Do you need help paying for heat?
LIHEAP
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program

ASSISTANCE
to help with a heating bill to eligible households

RECONNECT
to energy source if household is without heat or about to lose heat

INTERFACE
free furnace repair and replacement for homeowners without heat