



I have reflected upon the last year and recognize we may be facing one of our biggest challenges to date. With increasing attention being put on pandemic influenza and avian flu, it is apparent that planning, training and exercising with not only public and private healthcare, but with non-medical partners is essential. Conservative projections, from many health and medical experts, put great responsibility on us to identify potential state and local resources to respond to this threat. Over the past year numerous agencies throughout the state have focused on coordinated efforts to prepare for a

myriad of scenarios. These efforts will need to be continued and enhanced in the future.

I would like to thank all of you for the assistance and support shown to me during my tenure as president. I have truly enjoyed the past year and consider it a great learning experience. We are fortunate to be able to pass the gavel to President Elect Debbie Swanson for the next year. Debbie has a great deal of enthusiasm and commitment to NDPHA and will do a wonderful job.

I hope that all of you have a great spring and can find time to attend the 2006 Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health in Fargo.

***Jim Hausauer, President***



## **Congratulations to Kelly Buettner-Schmidt 2005 recipient of the Lillian Wald Award!**

Submitted by Nikki Medalen, BSN

Congratulations to Kelly Buettner-Schmidt, BSN, MSN, Minot, ND, who was the recipient of the Lillian Wald award at the American Public Health Association convention held in Philadelphia in December. The Lillian Wald award is presented to an individual, group or agency that depicts exemplary public health nursing practice to the public. Nominees must have demonstrated initiative and resourcefulness in developing efforts to improve the health of the public through political, legislative, or interdisciplinary activism. These achievements represent a leadership role in promoting social reform activities for client groups, influencing health policy and health laws, strengthening public health nursing practice and/or through collaborating with other health care workers, legislators, and public officials. Buettner-Schmidt was nominated by Dorcas Kunkel, RN, BSN, MSN, APRN-BC.

Kelly began her work in public health at First District Health Unit (FDHU) in 1992, first as a contract nurse with the Newborn Home Visiting Program, then full time as the Ward County Public Health Nurse. She was instrumental in the development of the Optimal Pregnancy Outcome Program at FDHU and enjoyed working with prospective moms and newborn babies. In 1996 she began working with tobacco cessation, then after two years, channeled her effort toward tobacco prevention. As coordinator of FDHU's Tobacco Prevention program she developed educational and preventive activities for children and adolescents. Buettner-Schmidt also coordinated the formation of Minot's STAMP (Stop Tobacco's Access to Minors Program) Coalition and directed that program until 2001. During that time the coalition advocated for several city ordinances related to youth access, culminating in 2002 with the ordinance to require smoke free restaurants in the city of Minot; the first such ordinance in the state.

Currently Buettner-Schmidt is the Principal Investigator of the Tobacco Education, Research and Policy Project (TERPP); one of the projects within the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities. Buettner-Schmidt works as a consultant on smoke-free initiatives and other tobacco prevention activities for the North Dakota Department of Health and local public health units. In addition, in 2003 she was asked to become part of the Smokeless States Project, a large grant opportunity jointly created by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the American Medical Association that awards funds to state agencies seeking to promote smoke-free policies via state laws and local ordinances. Through these endeavors she has presented at many state, regional and national conferences focusing on the health effects of smoking and second hand smoke. She is also the lead faculty in Minot State University's public health nursing courses. Her students look to her as a role model in nursing leadership and professionalism. Buettner-Schmidt recently developed an innovative online Public Health Nursing course to assist diploma degree nurses in getting their bachelors degree through MSU's new RN to BSN program. The first semester of this course is running January through May of 2006.

Dorcas Kunkel, a colleague and nominator for this award, said, "I just couldn't resist putting up Kelly's name for recognition for all her toil and hard work to improve the health of North Dakota's population. It has been a huge commitment for her, and her family too." Dr. Elizabeth Pross, chair of the MSU Nursing Department, stated in her letter of support, "Kelly is a North Dakota nurse whom depicts exemplary contributions to the public health of people locally, state-wide and nationally. Her activism is apparent politically, legislatively, professionally, and interdisciplinary".

Kelly lives in Minot with her husband, Joe, and daughters Megan (16), Marlee (13) and Josie (12). Her family and colleagues in public health and at Minot State University congratulate her on her accomplishments and this prestigious award.



## 2006 Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health

March 22-24, Holiday Inn, Fargo

Registration information can be found at the NDPHA website. Go to [www.health.state.nd.us/ndpha/](http://www.health.state.nd.us/ndpha/) for more details

### UPCOMING EVENTS

NDPHA members can submit information about upcoming events of importance to public health workers in North Dakota to be listed in our quarterly newsletter. To promote your event, contact Debbie Swanson email: [dswanson@grandforksgov.com](mailto:dswanson@grandforksgov.com) or 701-787-8113.

**March 22-24, 2006**

Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health  
Holiday Inn, Fargo

**May 18-19, 2006**

"Vaccination Expedition 2006, A North Dakota Adventure,"  
Alerus Center, Grand Forks.

For more information contact Kathy Dunn at [kdunn@grandforksgov.com](mailto:kdunn@grandforksgov.com)

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## **North Dakota Suicide Prevention Project Wins APHA Award**

Submitted by Carol Meidinger

The North Dakota Adolescent Suicide Prevention Project was named as the national award winner for the nation's largest public health organization, the American Public Health Association, Epidemiology Section. The award highlighted the project as one that demonstrated measurable relevance to public health improvement. The award highlights a project using innovative and creative public health approaches with state,

local and community-based public health action.

Mark LoMurray, Suicide Prevention Project Director for the Mental Health Association in North Dakota, and Carol Meidinger, Injury Prevention Program Director for the North Dakota Department of Health were named in the award. The project works closely with the North Dakota Suicide Prevention Task Force and dozens of tribal and rural partners throughout the state. Since the project's inception in 2000, it has trained over 40,000 North Dakotans in suicide prevention strategies.

The five-year trend since the start of the project showed a sustained 35 percent reduction in North Dakota 10- to 24-year old suicide fatalities, compared to the ten-year average in the 1990s. The North Dakota Youth Risk Behavior Survey (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) comparing 1999 to 2003 showed the following: 29 percent reduction in teens having seriously thought about suicide; 20 percent reduction in teens having made a suicide plan; and 20 percent reduction in teens having made suicide attempts that needed medical attention.

For more information about the project, contact Mark LoMurray, 471-7186, [outreach@btinet.net](mailto:outreach@btinet.net).

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## ***A TRIBUTE TO JILL LEPPERT***

Submitted by Colleen Pearce, ND Dept of Health

This past October we said goodbye to Jill Leppert, nutritionist for the ND Department of Health WIC Program and long time public health advocate.

Her contributions to North Dakota public health were many. Jill was the first nutritionist hired for the ND WIC Program, and became known as the "grandmother of the WIC Program", for her 30 years of dedicated service to improving the lives of low-income mothers and children. She spent over 20 years coordinating and directing the WIC services in Rolette County and Turtle Mountain WIC Programs before becoming the ND State WIC Nutritionist in 1997.

For the state, Jill wrote an innovative research grant on motivational interviewing and conducted research with the Harvard School of Public Health that led to three nationally published articles on ND WIC diets. She helped create an education video on parent/child eating responsibilities that is used by WIC, Head Start and childcare agencies. Jill found many ways to make the jobs of local staff easier while ensuring quality services. These included the Pick-WIC Papers (a client monthly newsletter), staff packets with ideas for monthly nutrition topics and new educational resources for staff to use when counseling families. Jill chaired a number of committees of local WIC staff and very much appreciated the experiences and talents each brought to the table.

Jill was the first state nutritionist to serve as president of the National WIC Association (NWA) in 2003. In 2004 she testified before the US Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry on the Child Nutrition Act. Over the years she received a number of Certificates of Appreciation from the USDA for her exemplary service and dedication as a member of a variety of committees and work groups. An officer in the ND Dietetic Association and the ND Nutrition Council, Jill chaired the Healthy Start Board, and was actively involved in a number of committees of Healthy ND and the March of Dimes.

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## CALL FOR RESOLUTIONS

An important part of the work of NDPHA is adopting positions on various public health issues. Advocacy is an essential part of public health as it helps to shape health policy and impacts the people we serve. The resolutions committee would like to hear from the membership about public health policy or practice impacting your work in the form of resolutions. Please submit your resolutions to Debbie Swanson, resolutions committee chair, at [dswanson@grandforksgov.com](mailto:dswanson@grandforksgov.com), by February 24, 2006.

If you have an idea for a resolution, please feel free to contact a member of the committee. We would be happy to help you shape your idea into a resolution for presentation at the annual meeting on March 22, 2006 in Fargo. Members are: Debbie Swanson, chair, [dswanson@grandforksgov.com](mailto:dswanson@grandforksgov.com), Tracy Evanson, [tracyevanson@mail.und.nodak.edu](mailto:tracyevanson@mail.und.nodak.edu), Karen Oby [karenoby@yahoo.com](mailto:karenoby@yahoo.com), and Deb Arnold [darnold@state.nd.us](mailto:darnold@state.nd.us). So put on your public health advocacy hats and let us hear from you!

**JUST A REMINDER THAT IT IS TIME TO SUBMIT YOUR 2006 DUES. PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN AN INFORMATION FORM WITH YOUR CHECK. IF YOU ARE AWARE OF A MEMBER WHO HAS NOT BEEN RECEIVING THE NEWSLETTER OR EMAIL FROM THE NDPHA OFFICE, PLEASE CONTACT ME.** LOIS MACKEY



Remit to: NDPHA...PO Box 572...Minot, ND 58702-0572  
Email: [ndpha@srt.com](mailto:ndpha@srt.com)

### Contact Information

The information listed below is what we keep in our database. Please complete the blank fields.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
Department \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

Member of APHA (American Public Health Association):  Yes  No

Interest Category: Please indicate your preference from the list below:

- Administrative Support
- Environmental Health
- Health Policy, Planning, and Administration
- Reproductive Health and Education
- Nursing
- Nutrition
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Categories and Rates

Individual = \$35

Student = \$15

Organization = \$75 (one contact person)

#### Group Rates

A special rate is available to employer groups wishing to provide membership to multiple individuals:

Group of 4-9: \$31.25 each

Group of 10-15: \$30.00 each

Group of 16+: \$28.75 each