



ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF BOARDS OF HEALTH



The Bugle Call

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DECEMBER 2009
Fifty-Sixth Edition

IABH MEETS IN BLOOMINGTON

The rescheduled meeting of the Illinois Association of Boards of Health took place November 3, 2009 at the McLean County Health Department in Bloomington, Illinois.

Present were Carol Elliott, President Elect; Annie Clark, Secretary; Kent Scheibel, Treasurer; Jan Allen, Kay Banta, Marcia Custer, Doc Holiday, and Margaret Leonard.

The Minutes and Treasurer's reports were approved.

Treasurer Kent Scheibel reported that because the CD was losing interest, he moved funds into a regular checking account. Current funds in the checking account: \$6,868.06.

Income from members was \$3,200 in 2009, as compared to \$5,200 in 2008. Discussion followed resulting in action to lower the membership dues to \$75.00 for 2010. Membership forms are to be sent to all local boards of health by January 15, 2010.

Carol Elliott attended the Illinois State Health Improvement Team meeting on October 21st on behalf of IABH. The MAPP process was discussed including assessment, forces of change, obesity and work force stability. Five teams are scheduled to meet and will include private sector representation.

Jan Allen presented a National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH) film about local boards of health. It covered the three core functions of assessment, policy development, and assurance, as well as the ten essential services. The film is available to all local boards of health.

A NALBOH telephone conference followed that included presentations by NALBOH staff, Ned Baker representing the NALBOH Board of Directors, and Ken Kerrick, a Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) member and Ohio Health Council member.

The NALBOH representatives indicated that they are aware of decreased funding at the same time more emphasis is placed on health emergencies.

Following the NALBOH telephone conference, members reported on activities in their areas.

Carol Elliott, Champaign/Urbana developed and distributed a kids' "Germ Busters" DVD, as well as ongoing video presentations and information about the H1N1 pandemic.

Marcia Custer, Madison County distributed a strategic plan process that is now on hold due to decreased funding.

Annie P. Clark, St. Clair County participated as a mentor of a faith based team at the Mid-America Regional Public Health Leadership Institute (MARPHLI) for year 18.

Jan Allen, NALBOH Board Member, St. Clair County, served as chair of Performance Standards last year that included Tribal Council representatives. They reported that governance procedures do not cover their situations.

Margaret Leonard, Macon County attended an Illinois Department of Public Health meeting as liaison for IABH. Flu vaccine could not be distributed by drive through, because fifteen minutes of observation is required after administering the dosage. Their health department is experiencing a funding crunch.

The next meeting is planned for April 2010 at the Illinois Public Health Association meeting, date and place to be announced.

Benefits of Joining/Renewing IABH Membership

- All who send dues by March 15, 2010 will be eligible to participate in a drawing to win their renewed membership for 2011 at no cost.
- Reduced membership dues in the National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH).
- Resources including orientation films at reduced costs.
- Networking with other health colleagues.

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF BOARDS OF HEALTH

Officers 2009-2010

President: Inara McGroarty
Winnebago County

President Elect: Carol Elliott
Champaign/Urbana

Past President: Margaret Leonard
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Secretary: Annie P. Clark,
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Treasurer: Kent Schiebel,
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from left to right: Doc Holiday – Madison County, Kay Banta – Vermilion County, Marcia Custer – Madison County, Secretary Rev. Annie P. Clark – St. Clair County, Treasure Kent Schiebel – Madison County, Margaret Leonard – Macon County, Jan Allen – St. Clair County, President Elect Carol Elliott – Champaign / Urbana County

Immediate Past President, Illinois Association of Boards of Health

One of four children born to Bernard T. and Margaret Walsh Donovan, Past President Leonard grew up on a farm. Her mother, Margaret Walsh Donovan, assisted her husband on the farm and also served as a teacher. She had graduated from the University of Illinois in 1927, rather unusual at that time.

Margaret Leonard nee Donovan received her primary education in local Macon County schools. After junior high school, she graduated from Sacred Heart Academy in Springfield. The academy is now known as Sacred Heart Griffin. Following high school, Margaret graduated from St. Mary’s Hospital School of Nursing in Kansas City, Missouri.



For seventeen years Margaret worked as a staff nurse, Employee Health Nurse, and Utilization Review Nurse at St. Mary’s Hospital in Decatur, Illinois. She has also worked in a doctor’s office.

In 1978 Margaret married Edward H. Leonard. They have two children, Edward Leonard, Jr. and Anna, an attorney, who serves as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Illinois.

Today, Edward and Margaret farm together with their son Edward, Jr. On the farm Margaret helps wherever she’s needed. She marvels at the advancement in technology, not only in equipment, but also in the seed they use.

Margaret reports that she really enjoys farming, but her love of farming shares equally with her love of nursing.

No doubt, Margaret’s interest in public health grew from her experiences in nursing. She says, “Public Health involves all aspects of our lives. I know that public health programs work to improve our lives. A few examples are school health programs; immunizations; the prevention and treatment of communicable diseases; and maternal and child health services.”

Of her appointment to the Macon County Board of Health in 2003, Margaret said, “I have enjoyed working with all members of the Health Department. They are all very willing to help, and they can always teach me something.”

Margaret’s interests are varied. She loves to read when she has time, especially history, both ancient and current. She and her husband both like to travel. Their last adventure was in Spain and Portugal, in July, which they found a little hot. She found Iberian history very interesting. “There is always something to learn about the world.”

Margaret also has an interest in politics. She takes part in local elections and serves as a Township Trustee in Niantic Township.

In January, Margaret had the pleasure of an invitation to President Obama’s inauguration. She said the trip was great. “I was so very pleased to share the historic moment with my daughter and son.”

Unfortunately, the gate to which they were assigned did not open. Many other people shared their predicament, but nobody got really upset. As they dispersed they noticed many visitors huddled around radios listening to the speech and the explosion of applause and cheers when the canon fire signaled the change.

Margaret said, “I really enjoyed my time as President-Elect and President of the Illinois Association of Boards of Health. I plan to stay involved

PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS LOOMS

The Illinois Association of Public Health Administrators (IAPHA) recently warned state lawmakers of an impending public health crisis. The delay in state payments and the adverse effect that delay has on public health protective services creates a dangerous situation, because local public health services are already stretched to the limit.



IAPHA is a statewide association that represents more than 80 certified local public health departments located outside the Chicago metropolitan area.

According to President Stephen Laker, the current delay in state payments is yet another critical problem for local health departments that have already been forced to lay off staff or make reductions in staff work hours because of uncertain funding and funding delays.

In the summer of 2009, most local health departments faced significant budget and service delivery decisions, as the legislature delayed setting its final budget. The delay in contracts and the payment of past due bills created additional hardships that will be carried over into the new budget year.

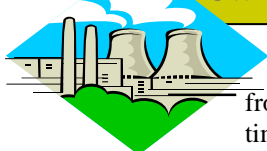
As a result, "Local public health departments in Illinois are understaffed and underfunded. That makes it extremely difficult to carry out H1N1 virus community response plans," said Greg Chance, IAPHA Legislative and Public Policy Chair. "The lost public health workforce, due to an unreliable state payment cycle, and the continuing need to address other critical public health issues simultaneously with a pandemic H1N1 response, have placed a severe strain on Illinois' local governmental public health system."

A fully-funded and reliable funding stream is needed in Illinois to support local public health infrastructure. It is vital that local health departments have a sustained level of state funding, adequate to meet core capabilities and assure health protective services across all of Illinois.

IAPHA is calling on Governor Quinn and the General Assembly to review the spending and payment priorities of our state. Consistent payments to state programs, especially to those delivering critical health services during a pandemic, are essential.

The Environmental Protection Agency

EPA TARGETS POWER PLANT MERCURY



will put controls on the emissions of hazardous pollutants such as mercury from coal-fired power plants for the first time by November 2011, according to an

agreement announced on October 23rd to settle a lawsuit against the agency.

Many other polluters were forced to reduce emissions of toxic material such as mercury, arsenic and lead after the Clean Air Act was strengthened in 1990, but power plants, the largest source of mercury pollution, aren't subject to nationwide rules.

The tougher rules will clean up more than just heavy metals because some kinds of pollution controls—scrubbers, for example—also remove other pollutants, such as soot.

Controlling mercury is significant because the pollutant enters the food chain and ends up in fish. Children, including those who were exposed to mercury before birth, are especially at risk of developmental and learning disabilities. Adults also can experience health problems from eating too much contaminated fish.

The Clinton administration before leaving office, declared that plants should be subject to controls under the Clean Air Act, but the Bush administration reversed that decision. Instead, it set up a cap-and-trade system which imposed limits on emissions and established a system to trade pollution allowances.

In February 2008, a federal appeals court overturned that approach and ordered the EPA to regulate toxic air pollutants from power plants. Then the American Nurses Association and environmental groups sued to compel the EPA to issue the regulations.

"Nurses see firsthand the negative effects the pollutants have on the patients they serve," said Alice Bodley, general counsel for the nurses association. "It's a long overdue but welcome commitment from EPA. Once finalized, these regulations should provide protection for hundreds of thousands of people, especially young people."

"Addressing hazardous air-pollutant emissions from utilities is a high priority for EPA," the agency said in a recent statement. It noted that the efforts began in July with the procedural step of asking for public comment on its plan to collect information on emissions from utilities.

The EPA is "committed to developing a strategy to reduce harmful emissions from the facilities, which threaten the air we all breathe," the statement said.

The decision "ends a long-running scandal" that's allowed toxic pollution to poison the air and water, said Frank O'Donnell, the president of Clean Air Watch, a nonpartisan clean-air watchdog group. (Excerpted from a McClatchy Newspapers article printed in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* October 24, 2009; "EPA Targets Power Plant Mercury" by Renee Schoof.)

THE HIDDEN HEALTH COSTS OF ENERGY PRODUCTION

A federal advisory group said recently that generating electricity by burning coal is responsible for about half of an estimated \$120 billion in yearly costs from early

deaths and health damages to thousands of Americans from the use of fossil fuels.

A one-year study by the National Research Council looked at many costs of energy production and the use of fossil fuels that aren't reflected in the price of energy. The \$120 billion sum was the cost to human health from U.S. electricity production,

Hidden Health continue on page 4

Hidden Health continued

transportation and heating in 2005, the latest year with full data.

The report also looks at other hidden costs from climate change, hazardous air pollutants such as mercury, harm to ecosystems and risks to national security, but it doesn't put a dollar value on them.



"We would characterize our estimate as an underestimate," because it didn't include those other costs, said Jared Cohon, the president of Carnegie

Mellon University and the chairman of the committee that produced the report.

The report says it's impossible to put a monetary amount on all the hidden costs of energy, in some cases because of a lack of information but also because the study had limited time and resources. It focused on the costs of air pollution on health.

Coal-fired power and motor vehicle transportation accounted for roughly 99 percent of those costs. The approximately one percent of the estimate remaining was from heating for homes, buildings and industrial purposes, mostly from natural gas.

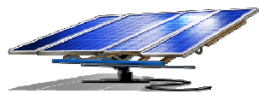
Electricity production accounted for \$63 billion of the damages that weren't related to climate change. Coal-fired plants, which produce about half of the nation's electricity, accounted for \$62 billion; and natural gas, which produces 20 percent, produced less than \$1 billion of the damages.

The report looks at the sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and particulate emissions from 406 coal-fired plants in the lower 48 states, which produce 95 percent of the nation's coal-generated electricity. There were wide differences among plants in the amount of pollution each produced. The estimated health damages ranged from less than half a cent per kilowatt hour to more than 12 cents. The average was 3.2 cents per kilowatt hour.

The best use of the information is to compare it on a plant-by-plant basis with the cost of installing and running scrubbers to reduce the pollution, said Maureen Cropper, a professor of economics at the university of Maryland and the vice chairman of the 19-member report panel.

"There are plants that are very clean out there, and the cost of further controls would not be worth the benefits and you wouldn't want to do anything," she said. But there are also dirtier plants where the health benefits would outweigh the cost.

The report says that nuclear energy produces low damages under normal



conditions but that the nuclear waste issue needs more study. Wind and solar also produce low damages, but more study will be needed as they expand, it says. For example, if solar becomes a large energy source, future studies should look at the pollution damages from manufacturing, recycling and disposing of solar equipment.

REPORT CITES STUDY OF SMOKING BANS

A report commissioned by the U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention examined data from eleven studies of communities in Canada, Italy, Scotland, and the



United States. The report, issued by the Institute of Medicine, concluded that exposure to secondhand smoke significantly increased the risk of a heart attack among both smokers and nonsmokers.

A federally commissioned panel of scientists issued the report recently noting that bans on smoking in places such as restaurants, offices and public buildings reduce cases of heart attacks and heart disease. The panel also said it found that a reduction in heart problems began fairly quickly after a smoking ban was instituted and that exposure to low or fleeting levels of secondhand smoke could cause cardiovascular problems.

"Even a small amount of exposure to secondhand smoke can increase blood clotting, constrict blood vessels and can cause a heart attack," said Dr. Neal Benowitz, a professor of medicine, psychiatry and biopharmaceutical sciences at the University of California, San Francisco, and a member of the panel.

"Smoking bans need to be put in place as quickly as possible," Benowitz added. "The longer we wait the more disease we are accepting."

The degree of heart attack reduction in those communities varied widely, from 6 percent to 47 percent, but every study showed a decline.

Others found fault with the study because none of the 11 studies were optimal in method or in data collection. Some studies were small, some were conducted over a short time, and only two noted whether heart attack victims were smokers or nonsmokers.



Dr. Michael Siegel, professor of community health sciences at Boston University said that such limitations were significant flaws. ". . . it could be that they have an exceedingly small effect" and that reductions were "just occurring anyway."

A panelist, Dr. Eric Peterson of Duke, said that even if reduction rates were small, the studies back bans.

(Excerpted from a *New York Times* article published in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* October 3, 2009; "Benefits of Smoking Bans Cited in Study," by Pam Belluck.)

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY RESEARCH SCIENTIST GETS GRANT
TO STUDY AGING AND ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Research scientist at SIU School of Medicine in Springfield, Illinois, Gregory Brewer, recently was awarded a five-year federal grant for almost \$1.5 million to help take the study of Alzheimer's disease in a new direction, by looking at how aging is associated with the brain disease.

Alzheimer's affects about five million Americans. That number is expected to more than triple by 2050.

Scientists know the disease involves the progressive failure of brain cells, but they don't know why the cells fail. The biggest factor is age. Most individuals with the disease are age 65 or older.

Brewer said, "Many agree that aging is essential, but very few people study aging."

Most research focuses on the metabolism of the protein beta-amyloid, the main constituent of the plaque build-up between nerve cells found in the brains of Alzheimer's patients.

Brewer is professor of microbiology, immunology and cell biology at the university. His research will use mice with Alzheimer's to determine whether a reduction in cellular energy in the aging brain contributes to memory loss. Brewer said, "When the brain can't handle stress, it loses synapses and neurons, and then you can't remember things.

"The same things that the heart people have been pushing for a long time to give people a healthy heart may also give you a healthy brain."

The answer could be a healthy diet and exercise.

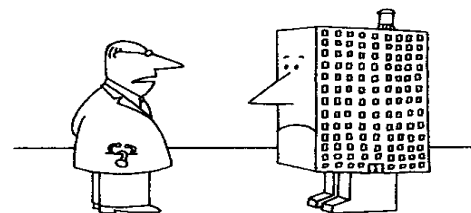
Gregory Brewer was a 1972 recipient of the Damon Runyon Fellowship Award, which trains the brightest postdoctoral scientists to lead research laboratories across the country. Since joining the SIU faculty in 1980, he has won \$7 million to fund his research in neurological diseases.

In September, 2009, he was named the Kenneth Stark Endowed Chair in Alzheimer's Research at the university.

(Excerpted from *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 9/3/2009 Page B3;

Article by Michele Munz, "Scientist Gets Grant to Study Aging and Alzheimer's")

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CHARLES BARSOTTI

"At your age, some plumbing trouble is not unusual."

WHERE DID THE WEST NILE VIRUS GO?

There were only four cases of West Nile virus in Illinois this year, and there were far fewer cases nationwide as well.

Just a couple of summers ago, the virus infected thousands, killed hundreds and kept people inside to avoid lurking mosquitoes and dead birds that can carry the disease.

Now the virus seems to have gone into hiding.

So what is happening?

There are several theories about the absence of West Nile. Cooler than normal summer weather and regular rains have kept mosquito activity down. An expert at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention hopes that people have gotten the message about insect repellent. "If you stop a mosquito bite, you're going to stop infection," said Emily Zielinski-Gutierrez of the CDC.

And then there's the H1N1 virus (swine flue) effect. The two viruses share some symptoms—fever, body aches. Some epidemiologists think that doctors might be watching for swine flu when a patient complains of those symptoms.

Doctors have long been trained to look for West Nile when a patient has a fever in the summer because flu doesn't usually circulate in the season. But H1N1 changed that by staying active throughout the hotter months and gaining a lot of attention.

But the viruses tend to strike different groups of people. Older folks are more vulnerable to West Nile, and younger people have higher rates of contracting swine flu.

The most serious West Nile cases, affecting less than one percent of people who catch it, can cause meningitis or encephalitis, and this year the diagnoses dropped to fewer than 200. Twelve people have died from the virus in the U.S. this year, down from a high of 284 in 2002.

The problems with understanding viruses is their unpredictability, and ten years of surveillance of the West Nile virus is not enough to determine true trends, says Zielinski-Gutierrez, who isn't making any predictions for next year.

She said, "While we're glad that this year has been quiet. . .there's never going to be a time where we can tell people, 'Don't worry about it, put the repellent away.'"

(Excerpted from *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch* October 3, 2009; Article by Blythe Bernhard, "Where Did the West Nile Virus Go?")



ILLINOIS PEDIATRICIANS BACK TAX ON SOFT DRINKS

A group of Illinois pediatricians has joined a national lobbying effort to tax sugar-sweetened soft drinks, hoping a tax would help to wean kids off such drinks. The hope is that the added cost would encourage parents to buy milk or juice instead.

A letter sent to media outlets by a group of hospital pediatric directors from Springfield, Peoria, Rockford, and the Chicago area read, "A tax on sugar-sweetened beverages. . . would generate needed revenue and, at the same time, contribute to improved health for all Americans, children and adults alike."

The group is calling for a one-cent-per-ounce tax on sugared drinks to fight what one of the doctors called "a national epidemic" of childhood obesity.

The effort is part of a national movement among doctors, encouraged by a piece in the September *New England Journal of Medicine* that argues for the tax as "a means of reducing the intake of these beverages and thereby lowering health care costs, as well as a means of generating revenue that governments can use for health programs."

The article notes that a one-cent-per-ounce tax would raise the cost of a 20-ounce soft drink by 15 percent to 20 percent, spurring some consumers to make other choices.

"If you have obese children, they are very likely to become obese adults," said Dr. Mark Puczynski, of St. John's Children's Hospital in Springfield, one of the nine signatories to the letter. Obesity, in turn, can usher in diabetes, heart problems and other health issues.

The group says soft drinks are a major culprit in more than tripling the rate of childhood obesity in the U.S. since the late 1960s. "It tastes good, it's colored neat, it's sweet," noted Puczynski, "and it has absolutely no health benefit."

The soft drink industry claims it is being unfairly singled out for a health issue that has myriad causes.

"If the issue is child obesity, there are ways to attack that problem that are much more effective than putting an arbitrary tax" on sugar-sweetened drinks," said Timothy Bramlet, executive director of the Illinois Beverage Association.

He called the drinks "a very small part of a big problem," and noted that the industry has already agreed to pull its products out of school vending machines in a nod to child health concerns. "The only thing a tax on soft drinks is going to do is raise the price of groceries on middle-income and low-income families."

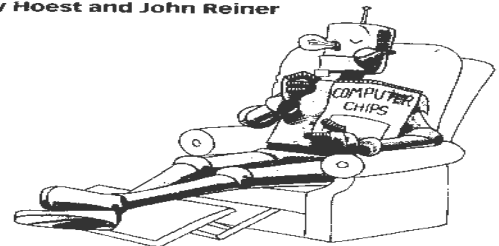
Doctors cite data showing that, in the late 1960s, about 5 percent of America's children were classified as "obese." By 2004, 17 percent were.

Treatment of obesity-related health problems costs \$145 billion to \$150 billion a year nationally, comprising about 9 percent of the nation's total health care costs, according to the *New England Journal of Medicine* report.

Sweetened drinks have already taken a tax hit in Illinois. The state this year reclassified certain drinks so that they're no longer "food"—which is under a one percent state sales tax—but rather "general merchandise," which is taxed at 6.25 percent.

(Excerpted on a *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 10/6/2009, Page A3, Article by Kevin McDermott, "Illinois Pediatricians Back Tax on Soft Drinks.")

LaughParade
By Bunny Hoest and John Reiner



UPDATE SCHOOL LUNCH STANDARDS SAYS INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE REPORT

School lunches need more fruits, veggies and whole grains and a limit on calories, says an Institute of Medicine report released recently. The report urges an update of the nation's 14-year-old standards for cafeteria fare.

School lunches can't put just anything on a child's lunch tray. They must follow federal standards, because the government's school lunch program subsidizes lunch and breakfast for needy children in nearly every public school and many private ones.

Yet those standards are lacking, according to the report. They don't restrict the number of calories students are offered, even though childhood obesity keeps climbing.

And they don't match up with the guidelines, which serve as the basis for the familiar Food Pyramid and were updated in 2005. They call for lots of fresh fruit and vegetables and more whole grains.

"Today, overweight children outnumber undernourished children, and childhood obesity is often referred to as an epidemic in both the medical and community settings," Virginia Stallings, who headed the report committee, wrote.

The proposed standards won't be cheap. The committee said breakfast prices could soar 20 percent, and lunch prices could rise by four percent.

That's daunting for school kitchens, which get less from the government, \$2.68, than it actually costs to make each free lunch, about \$2.92, according to a recent survey done by the School Nutrition Association. Combine that with rising food and fuel prices, and school kitchens are feeling the squeeze. Many have been raising prices for full-price meals.

The federal dollars "simply do not keep pace with rising costs on everything from food and labor to napkins and spoons," said Dora Rivas, president of the association and head of food and nutrition in Dallas public schools.

The group is pressuring Congress to boost spending on school lunches. The Institute of Medicine committee agreed, saying the reimbursement should be raised to cover the cost of adding more fruits and vegetables to the menu and substituting healthier whole grains for refined grains.

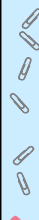
Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said the administration of President Barack Obama would review the report as it writes new rules for school meals.

The Institute of Medicine is part of the National Academies, an independent organization chartered by Congress to advise the government.

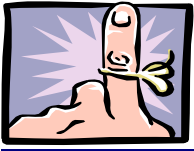
(Excerpted from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* October 20, 2009; an Associated Press article by Libby Quaid, "Group Calls for an Update on School Lunch Standards.")



Please note that all letters, problems, and articles you wish to appear in the March issue should be sent to Carolyn Chapman at 5 North 75th St., Belleville, IL 62223 by February 10, 2010.



Dates to Remember:



December 9-11, 2009
Governor's Conference on Aging
Marriott Chicago Downtown

March, 2010
Illinois Public Health Association Annual Meeting
Place and time to be announced

March, 2010
Illinois Association of Boards of Health
in conjunction with IPHA Annual Meeting

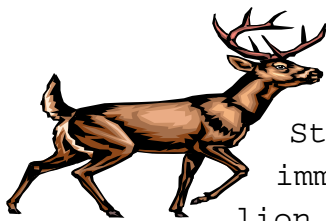
June 15-17, 2010
2010 Illinois Public Emergency
Preparedness Summit
Oak Brook

August 5-7, 2010
National Association of Local Boards of
Health Conference
"Journey to the Future: Facing Public Health
Challenges Today for a Healthier Tomorrow"
Omaha, Nebraska

More details of some meetings available at www.ipha.com

HUMOR?

Oh, the poor deer!



Washington, D.C.

Recently, a white tail doe from the woods in Rock Creek Park wandered into the National Zoo.

Startled by all the people she encountered, she immediately sought to escape by jumping a fence—into the lion habitat.

The two adult female lions were a little out of practice, but one of them caught, trapped and injured the deer, which had to be euthanized.

Viroqua, Wisconsin

A 180-pound, seven-point buck, feeling macho in this time of rut, took on what he apparently believed to be another buck. Unfortunately, it was a 640-pound concrete lawn ornament of an elk. The *La Crosse Tribune*

reported that homeowner Mark Brye said the deer rammed his statue head first, staggered about 20 feet and died of a fractured skull. Mr. Brye, a hunter, claimed the buck with a tag from the conservation warden. The tag note: "Lawn ornament fight-lost."

Carolyn Chapman
5 North 75th St.,
Belleville, IL 62223
RETURN SERVICE REQUEST

