



# LLHD Quarterly

Summer 2012

*Keeping you updated on your local health department*

## Smooth Sailing for LLHD Staff and Volunteers During OpSail/Sailfest



LLHD Deputy Director Steve Mansfield, Sanitarian Katie Baldwin, MRC volunteers L. Louise Brown and Karen Lewis, and Sanitarian Matt Payne at OpSail 2012.

Ledge Light Health District staff had an extremely busy weekend in July when OpSail and Sailfest brought thousands of people to the New London area.

Sanitarians helped food vendors prevent food borne illness by doing inspections to make sure they were in compliance with the Connecticut Public Health Code.

Sanitarians inspected three different types of vendors for OpSail and Sailfest: temporary vendors, who typically serve food out of tents; professional food vendors, who work out of trailers or trucks and have more advanced kitchen equipment than temporary vendors; and local food service establishments, who may serve food outside or nearby the establishment.

“The main things we look for are temperatures—making

sure food is being cooked and kept at the right temperatures, hand-washing and hygiene—things like making sure people are wearing hair restraints, and making sure there are no ill food workers,” said Senior Sanitarian Ryan McCammon.



Sanitarian Katie Baldwin talks to a food service vendor about proper cleaning and sanitizing procedures.

Counting all locations that held events over the weekend—State Pier, Custom House Pier, Downtown New London, Fort Trumbull, McCook Point Park in Niantic, and Fort Griswold and Shennecossett Yacht Club in Groton—Ledge Light sanitarians inspected about 75 food vendors.

“We did have some bumps along the way but our sanitarians were able to handle everything,” McCammon said, “the big reason for that is we were very proactive

this year in getting a hold of the organizers for all the locations in advance. All food vendors had been called and spoken to prior to the event, so they were made aware of what we would be looking for.”

“The execution went smoothly because we have really well-trained sanitarians that were able to take basic direction, go out and do what they needed to, and report back to one another.”

While the sanitarians focused on food vendors, Public Health Nurse Kris Magnussen led the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) in assisting the American Red Cross with providing water to OpSail attendees. The MRC and Red Cross set up six water stations throughout the area and ultimately gave out about 52,000 cups of water.

Ledge Light staff also placed hand sanitizer stations at several locations throughout OpSail.



One of the busy water stations that was set up by the Medical Reserve Corps and the American Red Cross.

# Thanks for a Great Summer, Nico!



2012 Harry Watson Intern Nico Francone collecting beach water samples.

Each summer, Ledge Light Health District chooses at least one high school student who demonstrates academic excellence and has an interest in public health to work alongside staff for the Harry A. Watson internship program.

Out of six applicants this year, upcoming senior Nicolás, a.k.a “Nico,” Francone of East Lyme High School was chosen to work with our staff in the fields of health education, environmental health, communicable disease and epidemiology.

Francone is recognized as an AP Scholar with Honors. As an Argentinian-American who speaks fluent Spanish, he is an elected officer of the Spanish Honor Society and says he enjoys promoting cultural awareness in his school and community.

He is also active in the community, currently volunteering at the William W. Backus Hospital and for two political campaigns. He enjoys playing soccer and is on the varsity team.

Over the six-week internship, Francone assisted in various public health activities, including daycare and restaurant inspections, health education

program promotion, complaint inspections, septic inspections, beach water sampling and more.

“I liked the restaurant inspections a lot because it’s fun to get out there and interact with people,” Francone said. “It’s a give-and-take thing with the restaurant owners, you learn a lot from them and they learn from you as well.”

He explained that his internship taught him a lot about the positive impact a local health department can have on the community.

“Before starting here I didn’t really know the magnitude of the importance of the health



Taking temperatures to make sure food is being stored at the proper temperatures.

district and how much they actually regulate,” he said. “The reason why our restaurants, our swimming areas are clean, and the reasons why we have programs in our schools and communities to keep us away from dangerous substances like drugs and alcohol is because of Ledge Light and all the effort put in by the people in the Health Education and Environmental departments.”

He also talked about the importance of emergency preparedness and the work of the Communicable Disease



Conducting surveys at the New London Farmers’ Market.

Prevention department at Ledge Light Health District. “Organizing flu clinics, organizing preparation for a possible anthrax attack—it is important to be ready for the sort of situations that we wouldn’t think would happen right now, and to take the time to ensure the safety of our residents.”

Francone said he wants to pursue a career in health but is not yet sure whether he would like to go into medicine or public health. “Certainly, helping people and making sure that people are safe and are in good health is important to me.”

The Harry A. Watson internship was established to honor the contributions of Harry Watson, a 1993 founding Board member of Ledge Light Health District who served as Board Chairperson and Vice Chairperson until elected Mayor of the Town of Groton. The internship aims to educate high school students and counselors of the excellent and varied public health career opportunities.

## Sound Hearts, Sound Minds Program Joins Public Health, Behavioral Health

Ledge Light Health District is pleased to announce that we have partnered with Sound Community Services, Inc. to create a special social marketing program called “Sound Hearts, Sound Minds.”

With funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and Abt Associates, this campaign increases awareness among the behavioral health and substance abuse recovery population of the fundamental goals of the CDC’s Million Hearts Initiative to prevent one million heart attacks and strokes over five years.



The campaign includes posters with messages such as “know the ABCS of heart attack and stroke prevention,” which brings attention to Appropriate aspirin therapy, Blood pressure control, Cholesterol management, and Smoking cessation.

“With this campaign, our hope is that members of the behavioral health and recovery population will feel empowered to take charge of their physical health to improve their lifestyles,” said Program Coordinator Carolyn Wilson. “This is a vulnerable population and we want them to know that they *can* achieve a state of good health by taking small steps and seeking advice from their doctors.”

The campaign will also reach out to patients who receive services from SCS and to primary care providers who treat behavioral health clients.

## GASP and Ledyard Safe Teens Encourage Parents to “Set the Rules”



The Groton Adolescent Substance Abuse Prevention (GASP) Coalition and the Ledyard Safe Teens Coalition are distributing about 400 mugs to local businesses in Groton and Ledyard that encourage parents to prevent underage drinking.

The mugs, which display the message “SERVE TEENS

BOOZE, YOU BOTH LOSE,” are part of a statewide “Set the Rules” campaign developed by the CT Office of Policy and Management (OPM).

According to the OPM, 65% of kids get alcohol from family and friends and 70% of eighth graders report that it is “very easy” or “fairly easy” for them to get alcohol.

“It is important to set a no-tolerance rule for underage drinking,” said Kerensa Mansfield, Ledyard Safe Teens Coalition Coordinator. “Parents are the biggest influence in their kids’ lives and kids are less likely to drink alcohol if they know their parents would punish them for it.”

In Groton, the mugs were

distributed to Bartleby’s Café, Buford’s Family Restaurant, the Green Marble, Mystic Market West, The Shack and Somewhere in Time.

In Ledyard, the mugs were distributed to AJ’s Restaurant, Felicia’s Sweetface Pastry Shoppe, Fireside Brick Oven Creations, Holmberg Orchards, Mo’s Burgers and Brew, Ray’s New Haven Style Pizza and Valentino’s Restaurant.

“We really appreciate the cooperation and enthusiasm of local businesses in helping the GASP and Ledyard Safe Teens coalitions spread the message to prevent underage drinking in our communities,” said Michelle Hamilton, GASP Coalition Coordinator.

# GASP Coalition Brings Prescription Drug Drop Box to City of Groton



Lt. Merritt cuts the ribbon held by Mayor Galbraith and Police Chief Giuliani in front of the the new prescription drug drop box at the City of Groton Police Department on June 20, 2012.

The City of Groton Police held a ribbon cutting ceremony in June for the new prescription drug drop box that sits in the lobby of the Police Department. Anyone can now come by the Police Department any time to drop off their expired medication in a safe and environmentally-conscious manner.

The drop box was purchased by the Groton Adolescent Substance Abuse Prevention (GASP) Coalition, a program of Ledge Light Health District, with funding from the Southeast Regional Action Council.

“Throwing medications in the garbage or down the drain are not optimum ways to dispose of drugs. This drop box is, and I certainly believe that our citizenry will come in and use this at their convenience,” said Police Chief

Bruno Giuliani.

GASP Coalition Coordinator Michelle Hamilton said the drop box can help prevent prescription drug abuse among youth. “The GASP Coalition has surveyed youth five times over the last ten years. Those surveys have shown a steady increase in unauthorized prescription drug use,” Hamilton said. “In the 2010 Groton Youth Survey, over 20 percent of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders admitted to using prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them.”

“It’s very easy for teens to access medication that might be sitting in our medicine cabinets; whether they are our own kids, our nieces or nephews, or our babysitters, they can access things that are really harmful to them,” said Ledge Light Health District Supervisor of Health Education and Community Outreach Jennifer Muggeo

Mayor Marian Galbraith was also present at the ribbon cutting ceremony to show her support.

“We are very pleased to be able to partner with [the GASP Coalition] on this because they do so many wonderful things to protect our students and our youth and that’s very important to us,”

Mayor Galbraith said.

Police Chief Giuliani and Lieutenant Harry Merritt thanked the GASP Coalition for purchasing the drop box.

“We are a community-oriented police department and this is another service we’ll be happy to provide,” said Lieutenant Merritt.

Prescription drug drop boxes are also located at the New London Police Department at 5 Governor Winthrop Boulevard and the Waterford Police Department at 41 Avery Lane. The Town of Groton Police Department at 68 Groton Long Point Road will soon have a drop box available for use.



Sergeant Scott Sanford shows a bin full of prescription drugs that were dropped off at the new prescription drug drop box in the lobby of the City of Groton Police Department.

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