

the **beat**line

BREATHE EASY ARKTEX TOBACCO CONTROL COALITION MARCH 2004

A PUBLICATION OF UAMS/AHEC-SOUTHWEST • 300 EAST 6TH ST • TEXARKANA, AR 71854 • WWW.AHECTXK.UAMS.EDU/BEAT.HTML

KICK BUTTS DAY

On March 31 area students will be able to kick butts in a positive way.

Coordinating with the national efforts of Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, BEAT Tobacco Control will host a "Kick Butts Day" Carnival from 4-9 pm at the Bobby & Sue Dowd Broad Street Park in Downtown Texarkana. The purpose of the carnival is to help educate students on the dangers of tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure.

One of the ways BEAT intends to accomplish the task of educating carnival-goers is through booths and activities. Using an activity guide book provided by www.kickbuttsday.com, participants will have the ability to sign letters supporting the need for smoke-free environments, sign a pledge wall to be tobacco-free and have target practice on special guest "Mr. Butts."

Entertainment will be provided by various groups and musicians, such as the local StraightWay clubs and College Hill Middle School Choir.

Teens with the BEAT members are getting involved by hosting activities as well. One of the events for the event will be darts, but with a twist. An individual will be given a dart resembling a cigarette and take aim at a balloon. Inside the balloon will be a scenario of what tobacco does to a person, such as lung cancer or heart disease.

Students will not walk away empty-handed. Prizes will be awarded at various booths as well as multiple hand-outs concerning tobacco and secondhand smoke. Local participants will also be on hand providing information and prizes.

The event is part of the BEAT work plan to educate the community, especially youth, on the harms of tobacco. Funding for the program is provided by the Arkansas Department of Health's Tobacco Prevention and Education Program.

For more information about the carnival or about participating via a booth or activity, please contact Jon Beck at 870-779-6095 or e-mail at jwbeck@uams.edu.



A photo of "Mr. Butts" speaking to students at KBD 2003 in Washington D.C.



dates to remember

>> March 24, 2004 –
Texarkana BEAT meeting @
UAMS/AHEC-SW, 12 pm

>> March 31, 2004 – Kick
Butts Day Carnival, 4-9 pm
Downtown Texarkana

>> April 7, 2004 –
Hempstead Co. BEAT
meeting@ Cherry's, 12 pm

>> April 30-May 1, 2004 –
Relay For Life Texarkana @
THS Track, 6 pm-6am

>> April 30-May 1, 2004 –
Relay For Life Hempstead
Co @ HHS Track, 6 pm-
6am

*APRIL SHOWERS BRING
MAY FLOWERS...*

'What's BEAT been up to?'

Tobacco prevention on-going process for group

While most people have been pinned up for winter and just now getting back out, BEAT Tobacco Control has been going strong in order to reduce the health and economic toll placed on the bi-state area due to tobacco use.

Recently, BEAT sponsored the group known as StarightWay Drug Prevention to the area. StraightWay performed in 10 schools, elementary to high school, as well as made several evening appearances in area churches. Their message was focused on making good choices, such as saying no to drugs like tobacco. Prior to their performance, BEAT officers were able to attend the 2003 National Conference on Tobacco or Health in Boston, MA. While there, the four officers learned about the efforts of creating tobacco-free/smoke-free environments as well as new and innovative ways to engage youth into tobacco prevention.

BEAT also sponsored Rick

Bender, a cancer survivor who had the majority of his right jaw removed due to spit tobacco use. The group partnered with the American Cancer Society to host the Great American Smokeout in November. A coloring contest was sponsored by the two groups in local elementary schools and winners were chosen the day of the Smokeout.

Getting youth involved with BEAT has also been another project for the group. Working to establish a sub-coalition, known as Teens with the BEAT, training has taken place in three schools: Genoa High School, Nashville Jr. High and Redwater High School. The basis of these groups was established during the summer M*A*S*H program held at UAMS/AHEC-SW. Teens were also recruited for the groups when BEAT took local youth to Little Rock for Teen Summit on Tobacco and Alcohol in November. More TWTB groups are being established as

the year narrows.

Presently, BEAT is working in three cities – Texarkana, USA, Nashville, AR, and Hope, AR – to pursue its goals and mission. Each city has a group that meets monthly to discuss and implement tobacco prevention and education activities.

In June, BEAT will have completed year two of its grant, having already applied for continuation funding for a third year. The group is completing three surveys currently: restaurant survey, tobacco retailer survey, and a county-wide tobacco use/SHS awareness survey. These will provide BEAT with baseline information about the community.

BEAT actively works each day to accomplish the reduction of tobacco and secondhand smoke through activities, such as surveys and conferences. The group works to make the bi-state area a healthy and clean environment and one day, a tobacco-free environment.

Uganda becomes world's 6th smokefree workplace country

Environment minister Kahinda Otafiire announced this week that Uganda has eliminated tobacco smoke pollution in all workplaces and public places, including restaurants, educational institutions and bars. Uganda joins Ireland, Sweden, Norway, New Zealand, and Bhutan as the world's first smokefree workplace countries.

Mr. Otafiire said the cabinet and parliament are backing the measure. Offenders will be fined between \$10 and \$50.

Dangerous product

Philip Karugaba, a spokesman for the Environmental Action Network, which works to reduce tobacco addiction and disease in Uganda, said the minister was simply implementing a court decision passed in December 2002.

Mr. Karugaba said the ministry was instructed to prohibit smoking in public places after a court ruled that tobacco addiction was dangerous to the health of Ugandans.

Teens with the BEAT



BEAT Tobacco Control provided Teens with the BEAT training to students at Redwater High School. The group currently exists as a SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) Club and several members are part of the local StraightWay Drug Prevention Club. Photo by G. MILLER