

Local group forms to fight smoking

By PAT IVEY

Blytheville Courier News

A group of local organizations have formed a coalition to fight a common health problem — smoking.

According to Elroy Brown, director of the L.V. Floyd Memorial Tutoring After School and Summer Program, the local Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Arkansas was formed by organizations that each had anti-smoking programs in place, but felt they could accomplish more by working together in a single large effort.

"First of all, 450,000 people die every year from smoking cigarettes," Brown said. "Smoking for youth is on the rise. We want Mississippi County to get the tobacco settlement money we are entitled to for tobacco education programs."

Brown said the group has already applied for a grant of up to \$75,000 to be granted from the tobacco settlement

money.

A coalition meeting is scheduled for noon March 28 at the First Missionary Baptist Church, located at 121 E. Cleveland in Blytheville. Special guest speaker for the meeting will be Shelly Watson, grassroots specialist in tobacco control from Little Rock. Also attending will be Eileen Allen, American Cancer Society control manager from Jonesboro. The meeting is open to the public, and will include a complimentary lunch. Anyone who will be attending is asked to call Brown by March 20 at 763-7167 so that organizers will know how many lunches to prepare. Lunch will be catered by Bon Appetite

"The coalition is inviting the general public to participate," Floyd said. "We are extending a special invitation to all of our local government and city officials. We would also like to encourage our state officials and all school representatives in Mississippi

• See *Smoking*, Page 3

Smoking: Grants sought

from Page 1

County to attend."

Organizations currently participating in the coalition are the L.V. Floyd Memorial Tutoring After School and Summer Program, the Mississippi County Boys and Girls Club, The American Cancer Society, Mississippi County Health Department, Baptist Memorial Hospital, Baptist Cancer Institute, The Samaritan Ministries, Gosnell Public School, First

Missionary Baptist Church, St. Luke Out Reach Community Service, Mississippi County Court, Osceola Public School, Nehemiah Temple Church of God in Christ, Mount Mariah Baptist Church, Christ Temple Baptist Church, Blytheville Public Schools, Blytheville Police Department, Mississippi County Literacy Council, Mississippi County Economic Development Commission, Armored Public School and Loving Jesus Ministries.

Blytheville Courier
Feb (?) 2002 News