

Disaster Communication System Now a Reality

Mobile and Baldwin Counties now have a SouthernLINC emergency phone system up and running. Ninety SouthernLINC phones were distributed among Mobile Infirmary, The Infirmary West, Providence Hospital, Springhill Memorial Hospital, South Baldwin Regional Hospital and the Medical Society. The phones have been activated and training has been initiated. We anticipate that this will decrease our communication obstacles for subsequent emergencies. Special thanks to Dr. Alec Blankenship for making this a focus of his Presidency.

Upcoming Events

- March 10—Champions for Rap-A-Hope Gala and Silent Auction
- March 27—Quarterly Meeting
- March 31—3rd Annual L.A.D.R. Bike and Run. Details to follow.
- April 27 & 28—Alliance Kitchen Tour
- May 22—Quarterly Meeting
- May 27 thru June 2—Camp Rap-A-Hope



The Kitchen Tour committee has been working hard on this year's fundraiser. The tour will feature five beautiful and unique homes in the Spring Hill area. Area merchants and florists will decorate dining rooms, kitchens and other areas of the home. There will also be live cooking and merchant demonstrations to help spice things up in the kitchen. The tour is scheduled for Friday, April 27 and Saturday, April 28, 2007. The proceeds will benefit Camp-Rap-A-Hope, Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy and Victory Health Partners, as well as other health projects. We hope you can join us and share in our excitement. Please call Katie Kirby (344-4278) or Brandy Revels (344-1212) for further information.

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Medical Society News



From Your President

Greetings and Happy New Year! I am excited about this year and I hope you share my excitement. The 2006 year brought us many blessings and I am in expectancy that 2007 will be even better. I would like to welcome our new Board members: Dr. Maryella Sirmon, Dr. Elliot Carter, and Dr. John Russell. I would also like to say thank you again for your hard work, dedication and service to our outgoing Board members: Dr. Rob Wood, Dr. Ted Catranis and Dr. Gaylord Walker and our Immediate Past-President Dr. Alexander Blankenship.

On the AMA front, the 2006 AMA Health Care Advocacy Agenda focuses on medical liability reform at the federal and state levels, Medicare physician payment reform and regulatory relief, expanding coverage for the uninsured and increasing access to care, improving the health of the public via healthy lifestyles, health disparities, and disaster preparedness, patient safety and quality improvement in health care and managed care reform. We have already seen some progress in the temporary freeze on Medicare cuts, medical liability reform legislation in 14 states, partnering in the 2006 "Covering Kids & Families Back to School campaign," and the Web-based educational video outlining the role of physicians in disaster situations, just to name a few. Please see the AMA web site for more info (www.ama-assn.org/). I look forward to representing you at the AMA meeting in Washington, D.C. this year. I will make a full report on that meeting in my next newsletter.

In keeping right in line with promoting healthy lifestyles, The Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics has launched its Peds-to-School wellness in-service project which matches pediatricians with local schools/school systems to provide a 30-45 minute teacher/ staff in-service on obesity and the importance of nutrition and physical activity. For more information visit the Alabama Chapter AAP website



Dr. Debra E. Gardner

www.alchapaap.org/ Click programs.

REMINDER! May 23, 2007 is the implementation date for the federally required National Provider Identifier number on all claims transactions as mandated by the HIPAA.

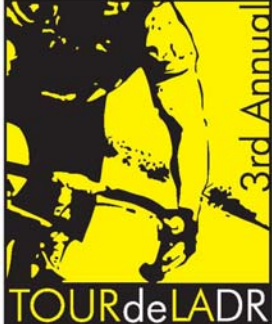
Please mark your calendars and reserve the upcoming important dates:

Feb. 3-6th, 2007 - 30th Anniversary MASA Governmental Affairs Conference in Washington, D.C. For more info see website www.masalink.org/.

March 27th, 2007- MSMC Quarterly Meeting-Underage Drinking Task Force - Mrs. Lori Myles & St. Paul's Episcopal School students.

THANKS SO MUCH!!
Thank you for your contributions and support for the United Way Physicians Campaign. We were successful in raising \$22,000!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!!
It's almost time for the



3rd Annual Tour de L.A.D.R.
(Lower Alabama Doctors) Bike & Run
March 31, 2007
Watch your mail for your registration forms and prepare to ride, run or walk for Camp Rap-A-Hope and The Mobile Medical Endowment Trust.

Our last quarterly meeting in December shed a marvelous light on the difficulties of patient education and communication as Dr. Mark Williams from Emory University talked on Health Literacy: Do your patients understand you? It was a very informative and impressive meeting. I encourage everyone to call Natasha Kendall, President of the Alliance to the Medical Society and arrange an in-service for you and your staff. It will definitely change how you practice medicine and will effect a positive change in patient compliance, safety and eventually health. As you may have received, even the AMA is promoting this in the AMA Voice with a pocket guide. Also, Dr. Joe Fontenot presented his new service in the community for patients with impaired vision, Community Services for Vision Rehabilitation. Please contact him for more information and referrals.

*Memorials Read at the
December 5, 2006
Annual Meeting:*

**Dr. Kenneth
Moore Hannon**

**Dr. John Wayne
Lowery**

Annual Meeting Spotlights Health Literacy Campaign Spear-headed by the Alliance Along with Election of New Society Officers and Censors

(l to r) 2006 Society President (now Immediate Past President) Dr. Alec Blankenship (l) and 2007 President Dr. Debra E. Gardner



(below l to r) Dr. Christopher Brown, Mrs. Ashley Brown, Mrs. Kristina Wood and Mrs. Janea Delmas



(l to r) Dr. Jorge Herrera, Dr. David Harris and Mrs. Linda Harris

(l to r below) Mrs. Carolyn Hupp, Past President Dr. Saunders Hupp and new Board of Censors Member Dr. Maryella Sirmon



(l to r) Dr. Manuel Cepeda, Dr. Jorge Herrera, Dr. Reynaldo Rodriguez and new member Dr. Melville Sternberg



Dr. Gaylord Walker (l) accepted a plaque for his service on the Board of Censors and to the Society. Wife Dr. Teresa Walker accompanied him to the presentation.



Alliance members were instrumental in bringing Dr. Mark Williams to Mobile as part of their Health Literacy initiative. (l to r above) Dr. Joan Landry, Dr. Williams, Alliance President Mrs. Natasha Kendall, Mrs. Lindsay Blankenship, Mrs. Rene Wagnon, Mrs. Kristina Wood, Mrs. Ashley Brown and Mrs. Janea Delmas. Seated are Mrs. Cathy McCaslin and Mrs. Jana Simpson



Rap-A-Hope Welcomes New Board Members by Melissa McNichol, Director

Camp Rap-A-Hope would like to welcome our newest members of the Board of Directors: Curtis Wilson, Dean Liollo, Scott Browning, Greg House and Dr. Roger Tart. Mary Ann Lafleur is serving as Board President with Phillip Garrett as President Elect, Bart McNeil as Secretary and Scott Browning as Treasurer. We say goodbye to Brady Berglin, Dr. Alec Blankenship, Katie Courtney, Robert Hope and Sara Willard, who have all served on the Camp Rap-A-Hope Board of Directors. Most have served in leadership roles and have made a tremendous



Counselor Hallie Blunck and camper Jacob Simons just loved that fish!

impact on the success of Camp. Thank you to Kathy Walker for her service as President of the Board for 2006 – job well done.

Camp Rap-A-Hope celebrated the Holidays with over 160 in



(l to r) New Board Members Curt Wilson, Scott A. Browning, Dean Liollo and Greg House. Not pictured is Dr. Roger Tart.

attendance at Bellingrath Gardens on Dec. 27th. We enjoyed a cookout provided by the Bell-south Pioneers and a

fish fry by Bill Butler (Melissa's Dad) and his fish frying buddies. Bellingrath donated the tickets for the gardens to all who attended. We had several children who have not yet attended camp giving them an opportunity to meet us and enjoy a bit of Holiday fun "camp style".

Thank you to Patty Elmore for once again doing a GREAT job with the Holiday cards. The fundraiser was successful not only in the money raised, but also in keeping Camp Rap-A-Hope on the minds of those in our community and beyond.

Camp 2007 will be here before you know it. Mark your calendars – May 27 – June 2.

We look forward to working with you to make Camp 2007 the best yet.

Thank you for all that you as the Medical Society did in 2006 to make a difference in the lives of children with cancer. You as members of the Society and what your Executive Director, Sheree LaCoste and your secretary Linda Davis do on a daily basis for Camp should be commended and is greatly appreciated.

The "Joe Bullard and Mitchell Company CHAMPIONS FOR CAMP RAP-A-HOPE" is March 10th and we are very excited to announce that Archie Manning will be our guest speaker. Hope to see you there.

(below l to r) Camper Evan Forbes and his parents joined the festivities at Bellingrath Gardens.



Alabama Baby Coalition Names New Chairman and Reports Significant Drop in Infant and Fetal Mortality in Mobile County

Dr. Wladimir Wertelecki was named the Chair of the Alabama Baby Coalition for 2007. Dr. Ted Catranis was also named Chair of the Case Review Committee for 2007.

The Coalition continues to boast improvement in the numbers of infant and fetal mortality for Mobile County. In 2004, the IMR was 8.6 per 1000 births. In 2005, the rate dropped to 7.4. The Coalition contributes this success to education and awareness of the problems associated with infant and fetal mortality.

The following issues were the most significant identified in 2005 related to maternal and infant health:

1. Lack of prenatal care records in hospital delivery records, usually due to preterm labor (i.e., prior to

these records being sent to hospitals) or incomplete information.

2. Substance use, especially tobacco, is a recurrent problem with significant impact on maternal outcomes. The need for smoking cessation programs for pregnant women, as well as emphasis on assessment of smoking status, was discussed and recommended to the Community Action Team.
3. Information sharing with the local Child Death Review related to cause of death and death scene investigations for unexpected infant deaths needed to be strengthened in order that ABC data would accurately reflect why our infants were dying

and identify any appropriate actions to be taken.

4. Co-existing prone sleep and bed sharing, in addition to other factors, are still a commonality among infants with sleep-associated deaths. The recommendation was made that our Coalition undertake an education effort focusing on new parents, grandparents, child caretakers (especially day care facilities) in order to get the word out about these risks to safe sleep.
5. Obesity has been identified as a predictor of infant/fetal death in Mobile County. Efforts to educate women, especially minority women about proper nutrition and body weight should be undertaken.



Dr. Wladimir Wertelecki is the new Chairman of the Alabama Baby Coalition for 2007.



Dr. Ted Catranis, an OB/GYN specialist, is the new Chairman of the Case Review Committee for 2007