

REALITY ILLINOIS NEWS



February 2006

Welcome To REALITY Illinois



Welcome to the first edition of REALITY Illinois News! The purpose of this newsletter is to keep everyone informed of REALITY Illinois events and activities that are taking place throughout the state of Illinois. Did you know that there are 13 chapters of REALITY Illinois? Chapters are based in the following areas of the state: Champaign County, City of Chicago, DuPage County, Jefferson County, Lake County, Logan County, McHenry County, Peoria County, Sangamon County, City of Springfield, Wayne County, Will County, and Winnebago County. That's a lot of teens working in Illinois to create a buzz among their peers and communities to stop and take a look at the issue of tobacco use and secondhand smoke.

On behalf of everyone involved in tobacco prevention, we thank you for your efforts and encourage you to continue doing the excellent work that you are doing. You truly are making a difference! We hope that this newsletter will inspire new ideas for chapters and will open doors for all REALITY Illinois members to collaborate together to really make an impact on reducing tobacco use and secondhand smoke in the state of Illinois.

Chicagoland REALITY Illinois Members Plant A Promise

Last October, during Red Ribbon Week, individuals and organizations throughout the Chicagoland area planted close to 35,000 red tulips in an event known as "Plant a Promise." Tulip bulbs were planted at 190 sites to honor those whose lives have been touched by a tobacco-related disease and to celebrate those who have chosen to be tobacco-free. In the springtime, and in future seasons, there will be a spectacular bloom of "tobacco-free red" displayed all over northeastern Illinois. Participating counties included DuPage, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will as well as Evanston and Oak Park Health Departments.



REALITY Illinois Lake County members planted bulbs at the Village Round Lake Beach. Pictured from left to right are: Megan Erickson, Grishma Pandya, Amanda Nadelhoffer, Kevin Coughlin and Maura Coughlin.



REALITY Illinois Lake County members pictured with Village of Round Lake Beach staff and officials. Back Row: Kevin Coughlin, Middle Row: Nemesio Villa, Grounds; Jeneen Smith-Underwood, Neighborhood Services Coordinator; Kaitlin Foy, Maura Coughlin, Ian Andersen, Village Trustee Judy Armstrong. Front Row: Megan Erickson, Grishma Pandya, Kim Martinez, and Amanda Nadelhoffer.

Great American Smokeout Activities by REALITY Illinois

Several counties were involved with activities for the Great American Smokeout, Thursday, November 17th. The Smokeout, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, is held annually to encourage people to give up smoking for one day.

The **McHenry County Chapters** of Reality Illinois had various activities in honor of the event. Members made posters and banners to promote the occasion. Over 8,000 people attending a playoff football game were given a message to remember the Smokeout, and mini-footballs were given to several hundred attendees.

Teens also signed smoke-free pledges, and were encouraged to support smoke-free restaurants. Teens and community members were given green ribbon pins to wear as a reminder to observe the Smokeout. Members collaborated with popular local restaurants to reward customers wearing the pins by offering discounts that day.

REALITY Illinois members from **Lake County** went out into their communities to encourage restaurants to go smoke-free for the Smokeout. This was quite a task but one that Christina Mazulis and Katie English, from Lakes Community High School were very successful at doing. They were able to have two popular Antioch restaurants, Las Vegas and the Golden Panda agree to go smoke-free for that day.

The **REALITY Illinois at Logan County** chapter placed signs outside Lincoln Community High School and on the road leading into the school on the day of the Smokeout. Signs had information and facts about the dangers of tobacco and also promoted the Illinois Quitline. They also drew 46 chalk bodies on the sidewalk at the entrance to the high school. The 46 outlined bodies represented the 46 people

who die everyday in Illinois from tobacco related illnesses.

Prior to the actual Smokeout, the **REALITY Illinois at Logan County** chapter also sponsored a letter-writing contest for all of their fifth grade classes. The students were encouraged to write letters to their favorite smoking restaurant to convince them to go smoke-free. REALITY Illinois members judged the entries and winners received gift certificates to dine at smoke-free restaurants with their families.



REALITY at Logan County members prepare chalk outlines in preparation for their Great American Smokeout event.

Cool

How can you be so cool,
with cigarette in hand?
Don't you understand?
Cigarettes kill.
You could be dead soon
with cigarette in hand.
Your lungs are blackening,
your cough increases.
You can barely talk,
now barely breath.
The end is near for the fool
that always has a
cigarette in hand.

~Amanda Nadelhoffer
Carmel High School, Mundelein
REALITY Illinois – Lake County

Will and Lake County REALITY Illinois Chapters Host Training

On Saturday, December 3rd, approximately 50 REALITY Illinois members and staff from 6 different counties got together at the Will County Health Department for a fun afternoon of education, networking, and idea sharing. The keynote speaker for the event was Carrie Otto, president of Ignite Illinois. Ignite Illinois is a statewide chapter of a national grassroots organization empowering young people to hold the tobacco industry accountable at every level by directing public officials to act responsibly.

Carrie used her experiences as a powerful tobacco advocate at the local, state and national levels to educate and motivate REALITY Illinois members to take action against tobacco, especially in regards to secondhand smoke and smoke-free ordinances.

Participants left the training with examples and ideas that they can take back into their communities to fight the issues of tobacco use and secondhand smoke. REALITY Illinois Chapters attending the event included DuPage, Lake, McHenry, Wayne, Will and Winnebago.



Group shot of REALITY Illinois members who attended the December 3rd training.

Participants presenting their arguments during a mock city council hearing for smoke-free environments.



REALITY Check in Champaign County



REALITY Illinois members Courtney Reynolds and Betty Wan selecting winners with Reality Coordinators Kerri Fish and Nikki Hillier.

After two years of educating the community about the dangers of tobacco use, the REALITY Illinois teens in Champaign County decided to spend some time focusing on elementary school students. Members of the teen advisory panel of Champaign County: Betty Wan, Erica Dockrill, Grace Fancher, Larry Marler, Courtney Reynolds, and Shauna Miller, sponsored a poster contest for K-5th students at several area schools and after school programs. The teens educated elementary school students on the dangers of tobacco use and then introduced the poster contest.

Over 450 entries were received for the REALITY Check Poster Contest. " We had so many entries that it was really hard to pick only one winner," said Betty Wan, teen advisory panel member. TAP members judged the posters and presented the winners with \$25-100 gift certificates to local businesses and first place winners also received t-shirts with their poster on it for their entire class.

Winners of the K-2nd Grade Division include:
 1st Place- Nathan Peterson, Stratton School
 2nd Place- Amran Hussain, St. Malachy
 3rd Place- Andrew Adams, Stratton School

Winners of the 3-5th Grade Division include:
 1st Place – Leah Waibel, Lincoln Trail School
 2nd Place - Kashala McCain, Prairie School
 3rd Place – Jinny Choi, Stratton School

The winners and other select posters will be featured on school folders as well as 2006 calendars.

Tobacco Trivia

Have something you would like to submit for the newsletter?

Do you have an article, poem, story, photo or idea that you would like to share in this newsletter? If so please submit it to your REALITY Illinois Coordinator and say it is for REALITY Illinois News.

Coordinators: The next issue of REALITY Illinois News will be put together by Kelly Castaneda from Will County. Please contact her at kellyc@willcountyhealth.org with any submissions.

Upcoming Dates



Kick Butts Day
April 5th, 2006

World No Tobacco Day
May 31st, 2006



1. What percentage of adult smokers started smoking before the age of 18?

- A. 50%
- B. 80%
- C. 100%

2. True or False: Nicotine reaches the brain faster than heroin?

3. How many chemicals are contained in cigarette smoke?

- A. Less than 2,000
- B. Between 2,000 and 4,000
- C. More than 4,000

4. What percentage of Illinois teens don't smoke?

- A. 50%
- B. 70%
- C. 90%

5. Which of the following states offer 100% smoke-free restaurants and bars?

- A. California
- B. Connecticut
- C. New York
- D. Massachusetts
- E. All of the above

6. True or False: Tobacco companies spend 41 million dollars per day advertising their products.

7. How many Illinois kids are exposed to secondhand smoke at home?

- A. 573,000
- B. 773,000
- C. 973,000

8. Non-smoking teens whose favorite actresses or actors smoke are ____ times more likely to have positive attitudes about smoking in the future.

- A. 4 times
- B. 8 times
- C. 16 times

Answers:

1. B 2. True 3. C 4. B 5. E 6. True 7. B 8. C