

October 16, 2006

Event Raises Breast Cancer Awareness

Early detection, treatment encouraged to increase survival rates

As the second-winningest female jockey in history, P.J. Cooksey never feared the speed and power of the Thoroughbreds she rode. She was undaunted by racing in sub-zero weather or the concussions and broken bones she suffered.

Breast cancer, however, proved to be a greater challenge than any she faced in her racing career.

“Beating male jockeys was easy,” she said. “Beating breast cancer was hard. Finding a cure is one race we have to win.”

Cooksey was the featured speaker at a breast cancer awareness observance hosted last week by First Lady Glenna Fletcher on the grounds of the state Capitol. Cabinet for Health and Family Services Secretary Mark D.

Birdwhistell also addressed the crowd of breast cancer survivors, health care providers, women’s health advocates and others gathered at the Floral Clock.

Diagnosed with breast cancer in 2001, Cooksey underwent successful surgery and intensive treatment, returning to racing in June 2002. She retired from competitive horse racing in May 2004. Cooksey attributes her quick and sustained recovery to early detection and treatment and continued regular screenings.

The observance was part of the First Lady’s statewide breast cancer awareness campaign and coincided with the first Wear Pink to Work Day, also instituted by Mrs. Fletcher.

Among ongoing activities designed to raise awareness of breast cancer and emphasize the importance of regular screening, the First Lady sends mammography reminders to women ages 65-69 during their birthday months. More than 140,000 women have received birthday reminders since the program began.

“I’ve received many notes and cards from women all across the state thanking me for the reminder,” she said. “My favorite response, though, was, ‘Thank you for the memo to get my mammo. I did!’”

According to the American Cancer Society, this year more than 3,000 women in Kentucky will be diagnosed with breast cancer for the first time and more than 600 will die from this often treatable disease.



Jockey and breast cancer survivor P.J. Cooksey addresses the crowd. Pictured, from left, are: CHFS Secretary Mark D. Birdwhistell; Chris Corbin; and First Lady Glenna Fletcher.

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Mrs. Fletcher said she and Governor Ernie Fletcher are committed to promoting breast cancer awareness as part of his Get Healthy Kentucky initiative to improve the quality of life and health status of Kentuckians through an emphasis on wellness and disease prevention.

One program in this initiative provided free mammograms during a three-day period in September to nearly 70 women in Eastern Kentucky counties where the breast cancer mortality rate is especially high. The program is administered and funded by the Division for Medicaid Services and the Division of Women's Physical and Mental Health in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

The First Lady recounted that one woman who received a mammogram through the program hadn't been screened in more than eight years because she could not afford the test, despite being a breast cancer survivor, which significantly increases a woman's risk.

"This is exactly why we have created programs like this," Mrs. Fletcher said. "This story and the stories of all the women who received mammograms from the mobile units in September all have the same goal - a happy ending."

Program Spotlight: KWCSP Offers Services

The Kentucky Women's Cancer Screening Program is asking women in Kentucky, "What's your number?" Do you know your blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol? When was your last mammogram or Pap test? What was the date of your self breast or clinical breast exam?

"If your number is five or more, it's time to talk to a health care provider about scheduling a mammogram and Pap test," said KWCSP Recruitment Coordinator Brenda Combs. "In the fight to protect our health, women can't afford to forgo yearly screenings that can provide early detection of breast and cervical cancer. Early detection is the best weapon we have for successful treatment."

Women should know how their breasts normally feel and report any changes promptly to their health care provider. Monthly breast self examination is an important way to find a breast cancer early when it's most likely to be cured. Not every cancer can be found this way, but it is a critical step you can and should take for yourself.

One of the most effective ways to prevent and treat breast cancer is through regular mammograms. Yearly mammograms are recommended at age 40 and should continue for as long as a woman is in good health. Unfortunately, many women forego screening because they have no insurance and can't afford to pay for these procedures.

All women need to know that the KWCSP provides low-cost breast and cervical screenings through local health departments. Specifically targeted are women who are age 40 and older who have not had an exam for five years or more or who have never been screened for breast or cervical cancer. For appointments, call your local health department or 1-800-4CANCER.

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CHFS Employees to Run Chicago Marathon

By Beth Crace

Chris Corbin wasn't always a runner and, once he got started, he didn't exactly fall in love with the sport. Nonetheless, he persevered, gradually increasing the amount of time he devoted to running and molding himself into a faster, competitive racer.

Like many running converts, Corbin now unabashedly espouses his devotion, sharing training advice and motivational tips. During warmer months of the year, he says he completes three or four road races (usually 5Ks or 10Ks) a month.

"It's just an efficient way to get in shape, considering the short amount of time that I have," said the executive director of the Office of Health Policy and Governor Fletcher's newly formed health and wellness program. "Most people have very little time that they can devote to physical activity and running is an effective form of exercise."

On Oct. 22, Corbin will join Becky Cecil and Kevin Mudd from the Commission on Children with Special Health Care Needs to run the Chicago Marathon as part of the "Get Healthy Kentucky" team.

Described by Corbin as the ultimate challenge for an athlete, a traditional marathon is a 26.2 miles. The Chicago Marathon, which dates back to the 1970s, is now the largest marathon in the country with an estimated 40,000 competitors expected this year.

Corbin is relishing the fact that he will be among them.

"Never did I imagine that I would actually be competing in a marathon," said Corbin, who started running two years ago.

Over time, the 32-year-old father of two wanted to challenge himself. To prepare for Chicago, he has been following two training programs that have required him to run three to four times a week with longer runs on weekends. Corbin covers three to four miles on shorter runs. Longer distances have stretched between 20 to 24 miles.

To make time for training, Corbin says he runs in the evenings or in the morning.

"Training – at every level – requires self-discipline," he says. "It's what you eat, following your training schedule and what you do in your spare time as well."

Corbin, Cecil and Mudd won't be the only CHFS staffers donning running shorts and sneakers on Oct. 22. Patricia McLendon of the Department for Public Health will be participating in the San Francisco Marathon the same day. A veteran marathon runner and triathlon competitor, McLendon is also planning to run the PF Chang's Rock Roll Phoenix Marathon in January.

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Computer Training Available Through New Horizons

New Horizons Computer Learning Center offers discounted computer classes for state employees. Classes are offered in Frankfort, Lexington and Louisville. Topics range from the Microsoft Suite package to computer programming.

Check out [New Horizon's Web site](#) for state government employees to see the list of classes, schedules and pricing for each location.

To register, visit the CHFS Office of Human Resource Management intranet site and follow the [Computer Training Procedure](#).

If you have any questions, please contact your [department training liaison](#).

All approved training is dependent on the availability of department funds.

Online Classes Provide Critical Training

Several classes are available online that provide valuable training to increase your work productivity and performance. Other classes apprise you of your rights and responsibilities in the workplace.

Employees are entitled to a work environment that is free from harassment of any kind. By participating in the [Anti-Harassment Awareness](#) training, employees will review what actually constitutes harassment, in addition to ways to prevent, stop and report unwelcome behaviors.

Workplaces, like society at large, have become more violent. The first step in preventing workplace violence is awareness. Learn to identify potential threats and how to respond in [Workplace Violence Prevention](#) training.

Every point of view and talent are essential to realizing your organization's full potential. Managers and employees are liable if their actions discriminate. The [Equal Employment Opportunity](#) (EEO) training is designed to help enhance your understanding of EEO laws.

Managing within the state merit system requires an understanding of the many regulations, policies and laws under which we function. Leaders will understand their roles and obligations within the system after completing the [Managing Human Resource Systems](#) class.

The good news is, classes can be completed at your computer. The next scheduled session is Oct. 16 through Dec. 16. Employees have two months to complete each class from the time of registration. To register, contact your department training liaison.

Employee Satisfaction Survey Postponed

The annual Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS) will be postponed until February 2007 to allow departments to receive survey results during their planning cycles.

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CHFS is committed to identifying ways to continuously improve the workplace for employees.

The ESS is one way employees are encouraged to express their opinions about conditions of employment. The Office of Human Resource Management (OHRM) summarizes the survey results in an overall report and works with each department to make improvements as necessary.

To communicate these changes throughout the organization and secure any necessary funding, departments should review the ESS results when preparing their budgets and strategic plans for the next fiscal year.

Please contact Jean.Kendell@ky.gov with any questions.

Visit OHRM's intranet site to view the [2005 ESS results](#).

Deferred Compensation Seminar for New Employees

Kentucky Deferred Compensation is an optional, state-sponsored benefit available to all state employees. Kentucky Deferred Compensation is an easy, tax-sheltered way to supplement your retirement needs. At Kentucky Deferred Compensation, we want to help new employees take full advantage of this important tool. Join us for a brief enrollment presentation on Kentucky Deferred Compensation, and take the actions necessary to:

Learn about the different risks and rewards associated with investing.
Discover the best way to invest your money to help meet your retirement goals.
Enroll in our 401(k), Roth 401(k) or 457 plan immediately.

The seminar is for employees hired within the past 12 months. The seminar is from 12:10 to 12:50 p.m. Oct. 26, at 105 Sea Hero Road, Suite 1. Lunch will be provided. Due to limited seating, pre-registration is required.

To register, call Carol Cummins or Larincia Bowers at (502) 573-7925 or (800) 542-2667. Please call for an enrollment kit if you are unable to attend.

Employee Recognition Tip of the Month

Can You Connect the Dots?

By Terri Cook, ERC Committee

Meaningful work - we all strive for it. When we feel as though our day-to-day activities contribute toward a larger goal, it adds value to us as individuals. We're no longer just a "worker," but rather we're accomplishing a mission. The mission of CHFS is to deliver quality services that enhance the health, safety and well-being of all people in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Who wouldn't want to contribute toward a mission like that? Unfortunately there are people who come to work every day who do not think about how their work contributes to our mission.

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This story carries an important message for all of us. Once there were three bricklayers. Each one of them was asked what they were doing. The first man answered gruffly, "I'm laying bricks." The second man replied, "I'm putting up a wall." But the third man said enthusiastically and with pride, "I'm building a cathedral."

Do you think the first and second bricklayers thought their jobs were interesting?
What about the third bricklayer?

People find day-to-day work interesting when they understand the big picture. Each person's work contributes to the success of the organization. Are you simply doing your job, or are you enhancing the health, safety and well-being of the people of Kentucky? No matter what your role is within CHFS, you're contributing to this noble cause.

Supervisors, help your employees connect the dots of how their work contributes to Kentucky's well-being and watch them approach their job with enthusiasm and pride!

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Employee Enrichment is a weekly feature for CHFS staff. These tips for making work better focus on team building, customer service and personal development.



Danville psychologist David Reber uses "Sometimes I Get So Angry: Anger Management for Everyone," a book by David Anderson, an associate professor for economics at Centre College, to teach his approach to dealing with rage. Reber says when we get angry we can choose how to react. He calls his approach "reality therapy."

In his book, Anderson lists 10 scenarios of people reacting to their anger in different ways, some destructive like screaming or throwing an object, and some positive like exercising or deep breathing.

Reber says becoming angry is a control issue. When we hear ourselves say, "He makes me so mad," we are giving that person control over our emotions. We are choosing to react negatively.

Anderson says choosing to respond to conflict constructively leaves the power in our hands. It also allows us to save our energy to alleviate the problem that upsets us.