

# HEPATITIS HEALTH



## Celebrities With Hepatitis C

Submitted by Enid Santiago-Cruz, Seminole County Health Department

Wow. I just had to share this from the *Kansas City Star*. We are not alone. Hepatitis C doesn't care if you're black, white, brown, rich or poor. This virus does not discriminate against any race, color or creed. Several public figures suffer from hepatitis C and some have died. We don't have room to name them all. Here's just a few:

- Pamela Anderson: Former *Baywatch* star
- Naomi Judd: Country singer and former nurse
- Dusty Hill: Bassist for the band ZZ Top
- Evel Knievel: Motorcycle daredevil
- Chuck Negron: Former lead singer of Three Dog Night.
- Larry Hagman: Who shot JR? (Remember the TV show *Dallas*?)
- Phil Lesh: Bass player for the Grateful Dead
- "Superstar" Billy Graham: The former WWF wrestling champion
- David Crosby: Rock star with Crosby, Stills, Nash and "Sometimes" Young
- Freddy Fender: (Deceased) singer of "Wasted Days and Wasted Nights"
- Jack Kevorkian: Retired pathologist
- Rolf Benirschke: Former star kicker for the San Diego Chargers
- Linda Lovelace: (Deceased) star of the 1972 film "Deep Throat"
- Willie Dixon: Legendary bluesman (died in 1992)
- Mickey Mantle: The baseball great died of liver cancer in 1995.
- Ken Kesey: The author of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* died in 2001.
- Allen Ginsberg: The poet laureate of the Beat Generation died in 1997.
- Bee Spears: Bass player for Willie Nelson



Enid Santiago-Cruz

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Name that tune: "I've been searching for the dolphins in the sea..."  
Answer on page 10.

## Hepatitis Day at the Capitol

On May 1, 2007, the Hepatitis Prevention Program celebrated the first day of National Hepatitis Awareness Month with *Hepatitis Day at the Florida Capitol* in Tallahassee. The purpose of the event was to promote hepatitis awareness and education, as well as encourage hepatitis testing, vaccination and prevention methods.

House of Representatives



Panels from the Hep C Quilt were hung from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor rotunda of the Capitol.



Leesa Gibson with the Bureau of HIV/AIDS



Becky D'Allesio from the Leon County Health Department.



Debbie Barnes, President of the Tampa Bay Hepatitis Support Group, speaking at the press conference.



Frank Meyers, Bureau of STD, with the Florida Public Health Association display.



Glenique Seabrooks, Leon CHD, prepares to vaccinate for hepatitis A and B.



Pam Langford (who took most of these pictures!) with HEALS of the South.



Phil Reichert introduces Debbie Barnes at the press conference.



Peggy St. Croix applauds Shenena Armstrong who's trying to figure out how the camera works.

**The 2007 Florida Hepatitis Educational Conference  
June 28 & 29, 2007  
Orlando, Florida**



Leesa Gibson and Carl McKissick at the registration table.

Thelma Thiel, CEO of  
Hepatitis Foundation  
International.



Tom Liberti, Chief, Bureau of  
HIV/AIDS, greets Christopher  
Kennedy Lawford.



Chris Taylor from  
the National  
Alliance of State  
and Territorial  
AIDS Directors  
(NASTAD)



L-R: Chance Center volunteers Phyllis  
Doescher, Gordon Licata, Lynn Snider  
and Debbie Barnes receiving the  
“Leader of the Pack” award from Phil  
Reichert.



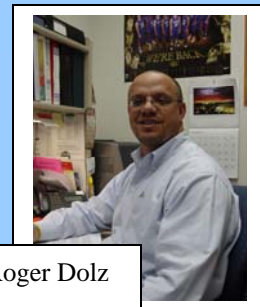
Lisa Cohen and Bob Keane  
from the Pinellas CHD.

More conference photos on page 7

**You grow up the first day you have the first real  
laugh - at yourself.**

--Ethel Barrymore

## Hepatitis Services in Alachua County Jail By Roger A. Dolz



Roger Dolz

The Alachua County Health Department (CHD), in conjunction with the Alachua County Jail, provides hepatitis screening and vaccination to their local inmate population. After screening, vaccinations are offered to at-risk adults, 18 and older. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), inmates who participate in health-related programs while incarcerated have lower recidivism rates and are more likely to maintain health conscious behavior (MMRW, January 29, 2003, Vol. 52 (55-1).

The CDC has shown that inmates have a disproportionately greater burden of infectious disease than the non-incarcerated population. Screening and vaccination will benefit the community through reduced disease transmission and the cost of medical care. More than 95% of incarcerated men and women will return to their communities.

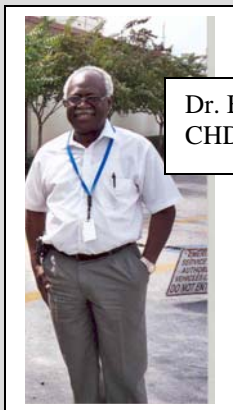
The average stay in the Alachua County Jail is 21 days. From May 2006 to July 2007, Alachua CHD screened 419 inmates for hepatitis. Of those, 64 tested positive for hepatitis C. There were 225 hepatitis B vaccines and 178 hepatitis A vaccines administered during that same time period. After being released, inmates who are hepatitis C positive are assessed on an individual basis by the Alachua CHD Hepatitis Program.

## Pinellas Jail Linkage Program

The Pinellas County Health Department has formed a collaboration among public health, jails, inmates and community-based organizations to ensure that those who are at high risk for hepatitis, HIV and other STDs are linked to screening, testing and treatment services.

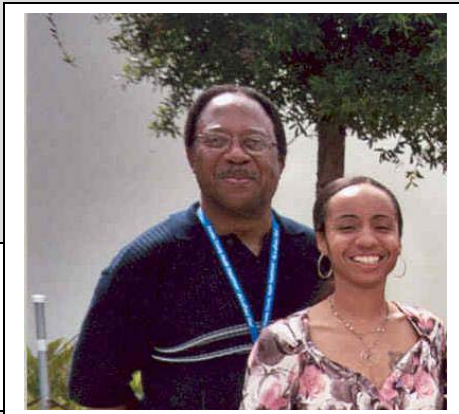
Goals of the jail linkage program include:

- Identify the occurrence of HIV, hepatitis and syphilis among inmates at Pinellas County Jail
- Provide inmate education and intervention that is sustained once inmates have been released by linking them with community health organizations
- Help the community as a whole by providing inmates with skills to modify their behaviors so that they do not infect the people around them



Dr. Beale Morgan with Pinellas CHD Jail Linkage Program

Standing outside the Pinellas County Jail are: Charles Dennis of the Pinellas CHD Jail Linkage Program and Ayasha Richardson with the Bureau of HIV/AIDS.



### VIS NEWS: CDC RELEASES INTERIM VIS FOR HEPATITIS B VACCINE

On July 18, 2007, the CDC released an interim edition of the vaccine information statement (VIS) for the hepatitis B vaccine; it replaces the 7/11/01 edition. The primary reason for issuing the interim edition is to stress that the birth dose of the vaccine is now recommended for ALL newborns before hospital discharge. Other changes were made throughout the interim VIS.

Existing stocks of the previous (7/11/01) edition may be used, but use of the interim edition is encouraged. A final edition is expected in 2008.

To access the interim VIS for hepatitis B vaccine from the CDC website, go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-hep-b.pdf>

For information about the use of VISs, and for VISs in more than 30 languages, visit IAC's VIS web section at <http://www.immunize.org/vis>

### IAC OFFERS FACT SHEETS ON HEPATITIS A, HEPATITIS B AND MEASLES

The Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) has developed ready-to-print versions of some of the CDC-reviewed Q&A material located on IAC's Vaccine Information website ([www.vaccineinformation.org](http://www.vaccineinformation.org)). The website is intended for the public, health professionals and the media.

The Q&As present information on the following diseases and vaccines: hepatitis A, hepatitis B and measles. Organized in an easy-to-follow Q&A format, these pieces can be printed and handed out to patients to help educate them about the seriousness of vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs) and the importance of vaccination. Links to the ready-to-print Q&As follow:

To access "Hepatitis A: Questions and Answers," go to:

<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4204.pdf>

To access "Hepatitis B: Questions and Answers," go to:

<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4205.pdf>

To access "Measles: Questions and Answers," go to:

<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4209.pdf>

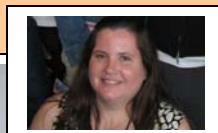
### CDC Launches New Hepatitis B Website

The CDC has developed a new website to promote implementation of the revised adult hepatitis B immunization recommendations. It includes educational and other materials specifically designed for each setting where hepatitis B vaccination is recommended for adults, such as settings serving adults at high risk for contracting hepatitis B virus infection, primary care and specialty medical settings and occupational health providers. The new website is titled *Hepatitis B Recommendations for Adults*. To access it, go to:

<http://www.heprecenter.com>

## Carlos Alvarez Program Review Panel

Persons in private and public health care professions are increasingly confronted with difficult and complex hepatitis and HIV/AIDS issues. Providing up-to-date information is necessary for the delivery of prevention efforts to communities within the state of Florida. In response to this need for the latest information, the Florida Department of Health, through a cooperative agreement with the CDC, formed an **HIV/AIDS Educational Materials Review Panel**. The purpose of this panel is to make recommendations to the department regarding HIV/AIDS and hepatitis messages designed to communicate with the highly diverse makeup of citizens in Florida.



The Bureau liaison for the panel is Karen Simons



Special thanks to Beth Swisher, former Bureau liaison.

Left to right: Maurice Moody with Escambia CHD, Nicole Mota from 211 Big Bend in Tallahassee and Jackie Nash---who retired from Duval CHD---but still stays active in various public health organizations.



Thomas Cherizard with Glades Health Initiative



John Acevedo with Community AIDS Network in Sarasota and Amy Zamot, Lee CHD and Regional Minority AIDS Coordinator

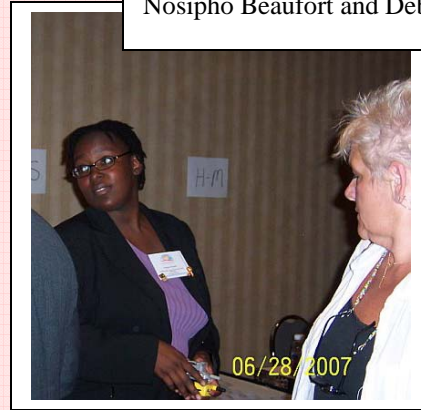
Members of the Carlos Alvarez Program Review Panel include people working in public health and community based organizations from all over the state of Florida. In addition to monthly conference calls, the panel meets twice a year.

"Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and inhuman" - Martin Luther King, Jr. (Medical Committee for Human Rights Convention 1966)

## More Pictures from the 2007 Florida Hepatitis Educational Conference



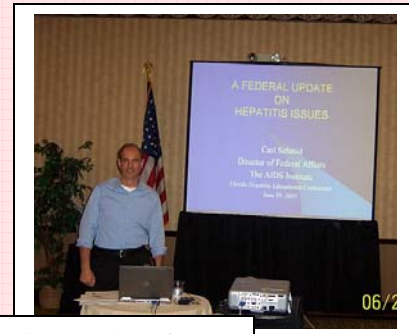
Andi Thomas, Pam Langford and Debbie Barnes



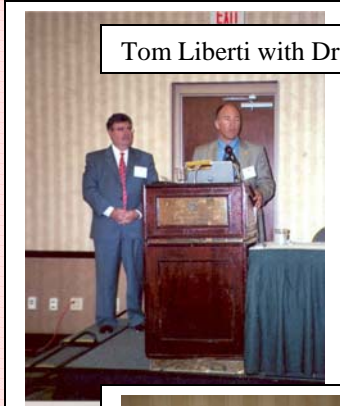
Nosipho Beaufort and Debbie Norberto



Dr. Russell Eggert, Director of Division of Disease Control, and Tom Liberti



Carl Schmid from The AIDS Institute



Tom Liberti with Dr. Steven Wiersma from the CDC.



April Crowley shouts, "Look who it is! It's Chris Lawford!"



Phil Reichert (middle) poses with Bob Keane, Pinellas CHD, and Dina Dolz from Alachua CHD

Editor's Note: A big thanks to Pam Langford for taking many of these pictures.

## The 2007 Florida Hepatitis Educational Conference

“A New Era of Opportunities” was the theme for the 2007 **Florida Hepatitis Educational Conference** June 28 & 29 in Orlando, Florida. The conference provided the opportunity for Floridians and healthcare providers with an interest in hepatitis to learn more about the disease, what’s new in treatment, services available to those who are infected, updates on hepatitis A, B and C, how to provide support and care for a friend or family member that is infected and other issues regarding the liver.



The agenda featured experts and leaders from around Florida and the United States who provide services for individuals who are at risk for viral hepatitis. Keynote and plenary speakers included **Christopher Kennedy Lawford** (see next page for his bio), **Steven Wiersma**, M.D., M.P.H., Associate Director of Science and Global Activities, Division of Viral Hepatitis, CDC and **Thelma King Thiel**, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Hepatitis Foundation International.

Below is a peek at some of the people and topics featured on the agenda:

- *Hepatitis Advocacy: A Federal Perspective*—**Chris Taylor**, Viral Hepatitis Program Manager, National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors, Washington, DC
- *HCV Diagnostics in the Era of Individualized Therapy*—**Alexandra Valsamakis**, M.D., Ph.D., Associate Professor, John Hopkins University
- *Vibrio vulnificus and hepatitis A*—**Dean Bodager**, Regional Environmental Epidemiologist with the Florida Department of Health, Orlando
- *State and Federal Legislative Issues Related to Hepatitis*—**Carl Schmid**, Director of Federal Affairs, The AIDS Institute, Washington, DC
- *Hepatitis and Liver Transplantation*—**Angel Alsina**, M.D., Lifelink HealthCare Institute, Tampa
- *From Patient to Advocate: A Consumer Panel Discussion*—**Debbie Barnes**, Executive Director of the Chance Center in St. Petersburg; **Pam Langford**, Executive Director of HEALS of Florida in Tallahassee; **Andi Thomas**, Executive Director of Hep-C Alert in Miami
- *Pinellas and Pasco Jail Linkage Program*—**Lisa Cohen**, HIV/AIDS Program Coordinator, Pinellas County Health Department
- *Living with hepatitis B*—**Chester Grabowksi**, ARNP, Lifelink HealthCare Institute, Tampa

## Christopher Kennedy Lawford

Christopher Kennedy Lawford is the firstborn child of famed Rat Pack actor Peter Lawford and Patricia Kennedy – and nephew of President John F. Kennedy. Chris was born and raised in southern California with presidents and movie stars as close relatives and personal friends. He is an accomplished author and actor, including roles in the films “Thirteen Days” and “The World’s Fastest Indian,” as well as starring in the daytime television shows “All My Children” and “General Hospital.”

His personal memoir, *Symptoms of Withdrawal: A Memoir of Snapshots and Redemption*, was published in 2005 and became a New York Times Bestseller. Additionally, Lawford is currently writing two books and will appear in the upcoming film “Slipstream” opposite Sir Anthony Hopkins.

Lawford's early life was marked by the traumatic assassinations of his beloved uncles Jack and Bobby. He succumbed to the burgeoning drug scene of the 1970s during his teen years, and dealt with a deep and long descent into near-fatal drug and alcohol addiction in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Lawford believes these activities in his earlier years led to his infection with hepatitis C (HCV).

It wasn't until 2001 that Lawford was diagnosed with HCV. Though he experienced no symptoms of the disease, hepatitis C had already begun to damage his liver. Four years after successfully completing treatment, there is still no detectable trace of the virus in his blood.



Today, Lawford is an advocate for disease awareness and is dedicated to sharing his experience, strength and hope with others to help increase diagnosis and treatment of HCV.

### Hepatitis Program Welcomes Carl McKissick

In February of this year, Carl McKissick joined the Hepatitis Prevention Program as a Data Manager. Carl has been a state employee for 17 years and came to us from the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. Carl says he “loves to mess with computer programs” and has been building databases for the state of Florida since 1990.

As a data manager, Carl is responsible for entering hepatitis B and C risk assessments into a data base, compiling and processing evaluations, assisting with investigations and working on special projects.



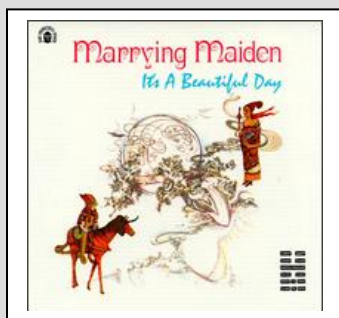
Carl McKissick

**The Greatest Glory in Living, Lies Not in Never Falling,  
But in Rising Every Time We Fall.**

Ralph Waldo Emerson

#### Answer to trivia question from page 1:

“Dolphins,” by It’s a Beautiful Day, from the 1970 album *Marrying Maiden*.



#### NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

*Hepatitis Health* is brought to you by the Hepatitis Prevention Program in the Division of Disease Control, Bureau of HIV/AIDS at the Florida Department of Health. We want to know what **you** are doing in **your** community to prevent viral hepatitis. Please submit your articles and photos to:

[April.Crowley@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:April.Crowley@doh.state.fl.us)

#### Words of Wisdom from REO Speedwagon:

You Can Tune a Piano, But You Can't Tune a Fish.

