

A Quarterly Newsletter Of



Southeastern  
Indiana  
Solid Waste  
District

Serving: Franklin, Jefferson,  
Jennings, Ohio, Ripley, Scott &  
Switzerland Counties

1-800-99-SISWD  
Summer 2009



# What should you do with unused or expired prescriptions?

Recent news from the environmental health world indicates that citizens and wildlife may be negatively affected by trace amounts of pharmaceutical residue found in ground and surface water.

Often, people must experiment with medicines to determine which one is the right one for them. When we can't or don't finish the prescribed medicine for whatever reason, we often flush the medicine, throw it in the garbage, or pour it down the sink.

When used correctly and for the right purpose, pharmaceuticals make a positive difference in people's lives. However, if ingested by innocent bystanders, such as animals and plant life, they may alter growth and reproductive systems.

Continued studies are under way.

Pharmaceuticals have been found primarily in discharge from wastewater treatment plants and surface waters. They may also be released into waterways via runoff from commercial animal feeding operations and aquaculture and from fields where manure and biosolids have been applied, according to a publication of the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant released in 1995. Sewage treatment plants are not designed to deal with drugs.

Another cause of concern with improper disposal of prescription and some over-the-counter drugs is the possible poisoning from accidental ingestion, particularly among young children and pets, if medicines are stored when no

longer needed or thrown in the trash. In addition, thieves often break into homes or go through garbage seeking drugs. Not only do they steal the drugs, but they might also steal your identity by taking personal patient information from the discarded container labels.

So, if we can't throw these drugs away or dump them, what can we do?

Many prescription drugs are considered to be "controlled substances" (such as prescription painkillers) and require special handling, often by a member of law enforcement, so our options are limited to special collection programs in your community. Recently, SISWD collaborated with the Ripley County Sheriff's office and the Ripley County

Health Department to offer such a program at a Senior Citizen Expo in Batesville. Other county law enforcement agencies have indicated an interest in starting such programs.

You may also check with your pharmacist or physician for advice on disposal. They may offer a "take-back" program for the unwanted medicines of their clients.

In the meantime, **do not** flush these medicines down the sink or toilet. **Do not** place them in the trash. And, **do not** give or sell them to others.

Everything we throw away may have some unintended impact on our water and our environment. We must think twice before we dispose of potentially harmful products.

## Scholarship Winners

Kristen Giesting, a recent graduate of Batesville High School, has been named the first-place winner in the annual Southeastern Indiana Solid Waste District Scholarship competition. Kristen, who will receive a \$2,000 scholarship, founded the Environmental Club at BHS. She initiated a plastics recycling program in the school which supplemented and expanded the school's existing paper and cardboard recycling program. She also led an effort to collect athletic shoes for recycling through Nike's Reuse a Shoe program, successfully amassing 300 pairs. With her interest in various aspects of the environment, she even presented information to various classes about vermiculture (worm composting). Remarkably, she assisted her mother in building a solar oven to help cut down on electricity costs in their home. Kristen plans to attend Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, to pursue a degree in Environmental Science.

A 2009 graduate of Austin High School, Jeffery Johnson, was selected as the second-place winner and recipient of a \$1,000 scholarship. Jeff was an active member of ARG (the Austin



Kristen Giesting



Jeffery Johnson



Kristen Coomer

H.S. Recycling Group) even as he participated in sports and was a member of the school Mathematics Academic Team. With sustainability and stewardship of the environment as two important aspects of his life, Jeff will attend Berea College as an Environmental Justice major.

Austin High School also produced SISWD's third-place winner, Kristen Coomer, who will receive an award of \$500. Kristen has been an active leader in the high school recycling group (ARG). She has also worked to develop a school talent show—the winners of which will be awarded special trophies constructed of recycled materials. A natural leader, Kristen will attend the University of Southern Indiana, majoring in Media and Creative Writing.

Scholarships are awarded on the basis of submitted essays which outline the student's environmental interests, efforts, and activities. Students must illustrate how they have made an environmental difference in their communities. The Board of Directors, staff, and management of SISWD convey our heartiest congratulations to, and our admiration for, these young people for their interest in the environment, as well as their notable academic achievements.

## SISWD Names New Director

Rene Stivers, Board Chairman of the Southeastern Indiana Solid Waste District, has announced Aaron Bell as the new Executive Director. Bell replaces Tom Perotti, who retired after nearly 18 years in the position.

"Aaron Bell is an excellent addition to our organization," said Stivers. "He brings a lot to the table in terms of experience and human resource management. The staff and board are already comfortable with him, and we all look forward to making strides together to promote and increase recycling in the area."

Stivers continued, "Tom Perotti was here from the beginning and brought us to this point, where we have five satellite recycling centers in the district, in addition to our processing center at the Jefferson Proving Grounds in Madison. We will miss Tom and wish him well in his retirement. We have confidence that Aaron can lead us into the future."

"It is exciting for me to come to Southeastern Indiana and work to improve our environment," said Bell. "With today's emphasis on 'greening'

our world, I am pleased to be part of an operation that has truly developed recycling in the area. Recycling is something we can—and should—all do in order to make a significant environmental difference."

With considerable experience in management, Bell comes to SISWD from NSK Corporation in Franklin, Indiana, where he developed and supervised "lean manufacturing," a system of continuous improvement practice to reduce costs and identify operational efficiencies. Bell also has experience in land and livestock management as Plantation Manager at the Presnell Plantation Hunting and Fishing Preserve in Morgantown, Indiana. "I am passionate about

the outdoors. It has long been my desire to serve in some capacity that protects and preserves the natural resources with which we have been blessed," said Bell. "Southeastern Indiana is a beautiful place with an abundance of these resources. It will be a pleasure to help protect the area through wise resource management."

Bell and his wife, Debbie, reside on Tapps Ridge in Switzerland County.





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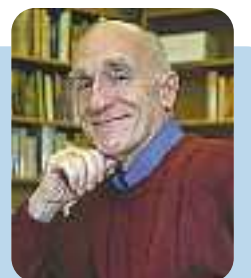


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## WHAT'S UP?

Edrei Garcia, a fifth grade student in Mrs. Janet Pickett's class at North Vernon Elementary, won T-shirts for himself and each of his classmates by winning the annual Design a T-Shirt Contest sponsored by the Southeastern Indiana Solid Waste District. Edrei's parents are Anna Cuevas and Jaime Garcia of North Vernon.



The T-shirts were delivered to his classroom as a surprise to Edrei. Betsey Vonderheide, Education Coordinator for the District, said, "This is my second year to be involved in this contest, and what a treat it is! The designs submitted—and we got dozens of entries—were delightful to look at. The choice is always difficult."

Runners up for this year's award were LeShay Evans, who was also in Mrs. Pickett's class at North Vernon, and Bryan Avalos, who was a second grader at Pope John School in Madison.

**We want your suggestions, questions and comments!**

**Southeastern Indiana  
Solid Waste District  
Jefferson Proving Ground  
Building #534  
6556 N. Shun Pike Road  
Madison, IN 47250  
800-99-SISWD  
(800-997-4793)  
SISWD@seidata.com  
www.siswd.com**

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## Competition at Switzerland County High yields cooperation—and a lot of recycling!

What a good idea for Earth Day! The Student Council of Switzerland County High School, under the guidance of teacher Pam Jones, proposed a school-wide competition to see which class could collect the most plastic bottles for recycling. One of the smallest classes, the Work Transitions class, numbering only nine students, worked hard to win the school's recycling competition, collecting 480 bottles. Their hard work attracted the attention and goodwill of two larger school clubs, the AP Environmental Class and the Conservation Club.

Club members staged an ambitious pickup on area roads. When they observed that other classes were banding together to win the competition, they voted to add their bottles to the amount collected by Work Transitions. The grand total was 2,750 bottles, which easily won the contest for Work Transitions.

"We are proud of our students—all of them—for the enormous effort they exerted to make this contest a success," said Sharon Hansell, Work Transitions teacher. "The Environmental Club and the Conservation Club were very generous to share their bottles with us. The Student Council has really raised the awareness of recycling in the school. My kids loved the Klondike Bars they won as a prize."

Switzerland County Schools have begun a system-wide emphasis on recycling. Each school recycles paper and

cardboard at a minimum. Many of the schools have added metal, plastic, and glass.

The Southeastern Indiana Solid Waste District collects recyclables from the Switzerland County, Scott County, Ripley County, Franklin County, and Ohio County schools. Jefferson County schools are served by the Madison Recycling Center.



## Over 310 volunteers made 8th annual Hardy Lake Sweep a great success!

On Saturday, April 25, Jefferson and Scott County Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) at Hardy Lake, and the Central Muscatatuck Watershed hosted the eighth annual Hardy Lake Sweep. There were over 310 volunteers who donated their morning to pick up waste and debris in and around the watershed area of Hardy Lake State Reservoir. The event falls between the national celebrations of Earth Day and the National Association of Conservation Districts Stewardship Week.

Volunteers arrived cheerful, enthusiastic, and ready to work. There were numerous scout groups from Scott and Jefferson counties. There were also community and 4-H groups, as well as individuals and families. The volunteers spent the morning picking up tons of trash and put in over 1,240 hours of volunteer time worth about \$24,192. They cleaned up much of the 2,448 acres of lake property, as well as more than 47 miles of county roads. As a thank you, each volunteer received a T-shirt and

lunch and were offered a free night of camping by the Hardy Lake DNR.

Generous support came from the many sponsors of this year's event. The Scott County Visitors Commission paid for lunch, which was provided by Pioneer Village at a reduced rate. Pepsi Cola

donated 336 bottles of soda and water. Wal-Mart of Madison donated another 100 sodas. The Scott County Commissioners worked with Jobsite Materials Management to provide a large dumpster for the many bags of trash. The Johnson Volunteer Fire Department provided an emergency vehicle and latex gloves. Girl Scout Troop 127 donated and handed out cookies to all of the



volunteers for a morning snack. Hardy Lake Friends and the Stanley family donated money, which helped to defray other costs. A big thank you also goes to the *Giveaway* and *Journal* newspapers, which printed numerous news articles prior to the event, helping to raise public awareness.

The Sweep's intent is to educate the community about the problems of illegal

dumping and littering in Scott and Jefferson counties. Littering has a harmful effect on our environment and places an economic burden on landowners and local governments. The community, working together, can protect our water and land. Become a volunteer. You can help by forming organized cleanups or by simply walking in your community to pick up trash. Your behavior is influential—others who see you will do the same. Be part of the solution. Do not illegally dump your trash. Recycle as much as possible, including aluminum and steel cans, glass bottles and jars, plastic bottles, paper bags, cardboard, newspapers, scrap metal, and more.

Finally, you can volunteer next year to be part of the Hardy Lake Sweep. Mark your calendar today for April 24, 2010. Please call the Scott County SWCD at 812-752-2269, extension 3, or the Jefferson County SWCD at 812-273-2070, extension 3, for more information.

*Submitted by the Scott County Soil & Water Conservation District*

**Need more information  
about your nearby  
Recycling and Re-Use  
Center?**

**1-800-997-4793  
www.siswd.com**